André Gide and the Soviet Union *by* Paul Nizan

# NEW MASSES

APRIL 6, 1937 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

Woodcut by Dan Rico

Uncle Sam's Puerto Rico Massacre *by* Benigno Ruiz

Finland's "New Deal" *by* F. Elwyn Jones

The Story of John L. Lewis—III *by* Bruce Minton *and* John Stuart

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# BETWEEN OURSELVES

HERBERT KLINE'S voice zooming through the ether a week ago, it has now been verified, had nothing to do with ham and eggs, radio-active or otherwise. It was the call of a correspondent getting in touch with his own periodical, the NEW MASSES. It was, in addition, the Voice of Madrid coming from its new station, EAQ2, which, radio experts now concede, is one of the most powerful in all Europe; so powerful that it drowns out the two stations in London and Berlin which until recently wore the European power laurels.

Every evening, beginning approximately at 7 p.m., E.S.T., the Voice of Madrid goes on the air on an announced wave-length of 31.65 meters. The air channel is also listed as 9.51 megacycles. More than fifty letters have reached Editor Edwin Rolfe, in addition to the early phone calls, informing him of Kline's efforts to contact NEW MASSES. The contact has now been established, and we have had the pleasure during the past week of listening nightly to our correspondent in Madrid (Correspondent James Hawthorne is now stationed at Valencia) describing a tour of the battlefront hospitals and reeling off the latest news from the front. Reception has been perfect, so strong and clear that it vies with our local stations in power. Letters have come from Florida to Nova Scotia testifying to perfect reception throughout the eastern seaboard. Other letters from as far inland as Chicago are also emphatic in their protestations that reception "is like our home town station."

A Madrid press bureau is in the making. The bureau will present article-broadcasts and interviews with leading Madrid figures over Station EAQ2 three times a week; the other nights of the week will be devoted to news flashes in Spanish, English, and other languages; also music. We urge our readers who possess short-wave radio equipment to tune in on the Voice of Madrid, to tell friends about it, to write to their local newspapers about this unique service from Spain. Then send your comments and criticisms to Herbert Kline, care of the station in Madrid and to Edwin Rolfe at this magazine. Articles by Kline will appear in future issues.

## *What's What*

THE awards of Guggenheim Fellowships have descended upon the deserving shoulders of several of our close friends and contributors, chiefly artists this year, whereas last year the left-wingers receiving fellowships were, in the main, writers. Mordecai Gorelik, who has mounted plays for the Theatre Union as well as for other social-theater enterprises, is one of the two stage designers of New York City who have been awarded fellowships. Contributors Joe Jones, George Grosz, William Gropper are among the artists who received fellowships.

Bennett Buck, who did the drawing on page three, is one of a number of NEW MASSES contributors whose work is on view at an exhibition entitled *The Social Scene* at the American Artists School Gallery at 131 W. 14th St., New York City. The exhibit will continue through April 17, and comprises sixty-eight works by fifty-eight artists. Contributors Samuel Putnam and Charmion von Wiegand will be among those who will speak in a symposium, held in connection with the exhibit, on *New Forms and Content for American Art,* which will be held in the American Artists School gallery at 8:30 p.m., April 21. Louis Lozowick will be chairman.

Another exhibition, on the lighter side of life, opens April 2 at the Hudson Park Branch of the New York Public Library, 61 Leroy St., under the auspices of the Cartoonists' Guild of America. Among NEW MASSES artists who are members of the organization are Ned Hilton, Gardner Rea, Soriano, and others. The exhibition will be by way of a first-anniversary celebration, another aspect of which will be the cartoonists' ball at New York City's Webster Hall on April 9.

Registration is now going on for the spring session of the Workers' School, at 35 E. 12th St., N. Y. The courses include principles of communism, dialectics, trade unionism, literature, science, psychology, and others. The new term will open Monday, April 12. A descriptive catalogue can be obtained by writing to the school.

We asked two or three weeks ago, with Ruth McKenny, what you were doing to see that fascism does not conquer in Spain, and we mentioned at the time that a number of writers and others had established a Ben Leider memorial fund in commemoration of the American newspaperman-aviator who gave his life in that cause. There will be an art show and auction on April 9, 10, 11, at 286 Fulton St., Brooklyn, the proceeds of which will go to the fund. Paintings, water colors, etchings, etc., have been contributed by leading American artists.

It is a regrettable fact that in a capitalistic society the most worthwhile products are sometimes prohibitively priced. An exception to this rule is ground for general cheering. What we are getting at is this: *Soviet Communism, A New Civilization?,* the monumental two-volume work by Beatrice and Sidney Webb which was originally issued at $7.50, can now be had with one year's subscription to the NEW MASSES (regular price $4.50) for a total of $7.50 for both. Details for this offer can be seen in the ad on page 30.

Editor Joseph Freeman will be the principal speaker at the first New York State writers' conference under the auspices of the Young Communist League, which will take place Saturday, April 3, at 1:30 pm. at the Workers' School, 50 E. 13th St., New York City.

# THIS WEEK


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Two weeks notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.


Published weekly by WEEKLY MASSES CO., INC., at 31 East 27th Street, New York City.


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Drawings and text may not be reprinted without permission. Entered as second-class matter, June 24, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 9, 1879. Single copies 15 cents. Subscription $4.50 a year in U. S. and Colonies and Mexico. Six months $2.50; three months $1.25; Foreign $5.50 a year; six months $3; three months $1.50. In Canada, $5 a year, $2.75 for six months. Subscribers are notified that no change in address can be effected in less than two weeks. The NEW MASSES welcomes the work of new writers and artists. Manuscripts and drawings must be accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope.


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## *Who's Who*

BENIGNO RUIZ is a Puerto Rican who makes his first contribution to the NEW MASSES in this issue. . . . F. Elwyn Jones is the author of *Hitler's Drive to the East,* recently published in England. . . . The anonymous American volunteer in Spain has agreed to send us material regularly. James Hawthorne's story on the Lincoln Battalion has been unaccountably delayed. . . . Paul Nizan is our Paris correspondent, a well-known French philosopher, and now on the foreign staff of *L'Humanité.* . . . Winfield Townley Scott is the grandson of General Winfield Scott. . . . Elizabeth Gurley Flynn has long been active in the American Labor movement. . . . George Dangerfield was literary editor of *Vanity Fair.* . . . Angel Flores was one of the founders of the Critics' Group. . . . Elizabeth Noble has written for *Art Front* and other publications. She will continue to review photography and the fine arts in our pages.

## *Flashbacks*

"WE solemnly pledge ourselves to one another, and to the laboring classes throughout the land, that we will unite and strive with out utmost vigor to effect such a reform that those who sow shall reap, and those who produce shall enjoy." Thus chorused thousands of depression-ridden Americans in front of New York's City Hall on April 3, 1838. The occasion was an election rally of the Equal Rights, or Loco Foco Party. . . . In the ledger of American imperialism are two entries under April 1, 1920: credit—five Socialist assemblymen expelled from the New York state legislature; debit—last invading American troops sailed home from Siberia, abandoning it to the Reds. . . . True democrat Thomas Jefferson was born April 2, 1743.


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NEW MASSES
APRIL 6, 1937

Bennett Buck

# Murder in Holy Week

***Responsibility for the machine-gunning of the Nationalists in Puerto Rico must be placed squarely on Uncle Sam's rule***

## By Benigno Ruiz

A WOUNDED Puerto Rican Nationalist dragged himself out of the range of the deadly fire of the police. On a wall he traced in his own blood: "Long live the Republic! Down with the assassins!" Then three crimson crosses, and he dropped dead. Out in the street, thirteen-year-old Georgina Maldonado, on the way to church with her three younger brothers and sisters, fell mortally wounded with seven machine-gun bullets in her chest and more in her face. Her four-year-old brother escaped with only a gunshot wound in a leg. These cases were but isolated incidents in a massacre that has all the earmarks of a prearranged affair.

On Friday, March 19, the Nationalists published in the *Mundo* the program of a celebration to be held in Ponce the following Sunday. Colonel Orbeta, fascist-minded army officer and chief of the Insular Police of Puerto Rico, went to Ponce, discussed the situation with prominent citizens and the chief of the local police forces, made up his mind as to the best course of action, then returned to confer with General Blanton Winship, governor of Puerto Rico. The next day, police reinforcements began to arrive in Ponce. At ten-thirty Sunday morning, the mayor of Ponce gave the Nationalist Junta of that city a permit for a demonstration and open-air meeting "of a political nature." This permit stated that the mayor had no power to sanction participation in the demonstration and meeting of any organizations of a military character which were not duly authorized by the government of the United States. At eleven-thirty the mayor signed an order rescinding the permit that he had granted only an hour before, explaining to the Nationalists that he had just remembered the fact that this was Holy Week. The mayor's sudden concern for religious proprieties was due to a visit from Colonel Orbeta, who had gone to Ponce on Friday to discuss this very matter, who had sent police reinforcements to Ponce on Saturday in preparation for the Nationalist demonstration, and who had decided to bring pressure to bear upon the mayor of the city only after the latter had actually given the permit that would make their demonstration legal. This was done just at a time when the Nationalists, assembled from all parts of the island, would receive the order a half hour or so before their parade was scheduled to take place.

After this step had been taken and proper instructions given to the local forces, Colonel Orbeta sat down at police headquarters and waited for events to develop. Two Nationalist leaders soon appeared, and Orbeta says that he convinced them of the danger involved in their parade. These men, according to Orbeta, left with the intention of dissuading their comrades from the demonstration. Orbeta waited in the police station for their report, he says, but after half an hour decided to investigate matters for himself. By the time he reached the scene of action, the shooting was over, and dead and wounded lay all about. Orbeta later told the reporters, "If I had been there, nothing would have happened." Since then he has been trying to explain what he meant.

AT TWO O'CLOCK in the afternoon, a group of uniformed Nationalists were lined up in front of their party headquarters. These people were very evidently unarmed, for their coatless uniforms offered no chance for the concealment of weapons. Whether people within adjacent buildings and on roofs were armed or not is more difficult to determine. But at least the police had already searched all the cadets and other persons in the Nationalist headquarters. If the only purpose of the police was to disband the Nationalists and allow them to withdraw, certainly their tactics were ill calculated to attain that end. The force was divided into two detachments, one of which faced the Nationalists, while the other, stationed in the rear, cut off any possible retreat.

Fernando Valenzuela, a Nationalist who was not taking part in the parade, but who was present as a spectator, reports that Chief of Police Soldevila told an officer, "When I stop them, then it's up to you"; that this officer passed the word on to his companions, and that they all drew their revolvers. Guillermo Montalvo Galindo, another bystander, and, according to his own testimony, a member of the Republican Party (the most definitely pro-imperialist political group on the island), was asked to leave the scene by Police Chief Bernard, who told him, "Go away. We

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don't want any witnesses to what is going to happen here."

The commander of the police forces ordered the Nationalists to suspend their manifestation. Then, according to the story of the police, somebody shot a policeman, and the battle was on. The Nationalist version of the provocation is that their band played the Puerto Rican national hymn; their leader called them to attention and gave the order to march; and then a fat policeman fired into the air. This shot was the signal for the beginning of a general barrage on the part of the police, who fired from both sides, and were thus responsible for their own casualties as well as for those of men, women, and children among the bystanders. The firing was kept up for about ten minutes, according to the governor's report. During this time, one policeman and thirteen civilians were killed or mortally wounded; and the wounding of seven other policemen and fifty-five other civilians has been reported. Some of these cases may also prove fatal.

All the individual stories seem to agree as to the general character of the carnage. Mr. Luis Frasqueri, a prominent businessman of Ponce, who is not a Nationalist, describes what he saw as "the most horrible massacre imaginable." He says that when the police began shooting, they fired upon men, women, and children indiscriminately; that they deliberately shot down people who came out of hiding; that they shot in the back everybody who tried to get away; and that they clubbed and shot to death the wounded.

Juan Antonio Delgado, a member of the United States National Guard, who was reporting for duty, has a bullet in his stomach, a broken leg, and a wound in his right hand. Juan Cotal, a chauffeur, and not a member of the Nationalist Party, received twenty-two gunshot wounds in his chest and throat. Adolfo Ducros, an eleven-year-old student, and likewise not a Nationalist, was shot through the skull and has bruises and contusions on other parts of his body. Guillermo Hernandez, a Nationalist spectator, declares that he was wounded at the beginning of the fight, and that while lying on the ground he was clubbed and kicked. Guillermo Montalvo Galindo, the Republican who was warned away by the police, tried to hide when the shooting began. Seeing a policeman who was a friend of his, he asked for protection; but a second policeman seized him by the belt, clubbed him over the head, and was on the point of shooting him when his friend intervened. Newspaper reporters have traced on the walls of nearby buildings line after line of bullet marks that follow parallel to trails of blood left by wounded men in their attempts to escape from the slaughter. Most of these trails end in pools where the fugitives were finally shot down and bled to death. A wounded Nationalist, Leopoldo Quinones, says he was clubbed over the head, arrested, and that when he was in the police patrol on the way to the station, he was attacked by a policeman who would have killed him had it not been for the intervention of another officer.

Dr. Lolita Perez Marchand, on her way to a hospital, was stopped by three policemen with machine guns. They took aim at her, and she says, "I thought I was going to be the victim of their bullets, for I was dressed in white like the Nationalist women in the parade. . . . If someone had not shouted that I was the sister of the prosecuting attorney, I don't know what would have happened."

Manuel Moriotta, reporter of the *Imparcial,* declared that he saw Chief Perez Segarra order his men to open machine-gun fire on the Nationalists from the rear. One policeman refused to fire on his Puerto Rican brothers, but was brutally forced by Perez Segarra to use his machine gun. Charges have been brought against this policeman, though at this writing no notice had been received of any official accusation against any other member of the force.

During all the excitement, Governor Winship was stationed at Villalba, a few miles away from Ponce. When all was over, Orbeta, shocked at the immensity of the tragedy, reported to him, and the governor assured him that everything was perfectly all right. Interviewed the next morning by a reporter from the *Correspondencia,* Winship seemed perfectly calm and unperturbed, but would make no statement until he had received an official report of the affair. The governor's statement was finally read over the radio. It was, of course, a defense of the action of the police forces. It seems, however, to have been written in somewhat of a hurry. It speaks of the Nationalist headquarters as though it were an arsenal, but neglects to specify that the only arms found there were two revolvers, two small-caliber pistols, and a few bullets. The governor's ghost-writer also neglected to mention the fact that, at the petition of the lawyers for the defense, the court took the precaution of moving the prisoners to the district jail. The lawyers point out that there are numerous riot guns and armed policemen in the police station, and everybody in Puerto Rico understands the allusion. Only about a year ago, Beauchamp and Rosado, Nationalist youths accused of killing the former chief of police, were shot down in police headquarters in San Juan; the officers involved in the affair were promoted before the case ever appeared in court; and when the case *did* come up, it was decided that the dead Nationalists had been responsible for their own killing. The *Correspondencia* of Monday, March 22, mentions the fact that police reinforcements began to arrive in Ponce on Saturday. The governor's statement says that police reinforcements were sent to Ponce on Sunday after the withdrawal of the permit for the parade had made trouble seem probable. Neither is the discrepancy between this version and that of the *Correspondencia* explained, nor does the statement explain why Colonel Orbeta made this outbreak probable by insisting that the major recind the permit. The author likewise makes

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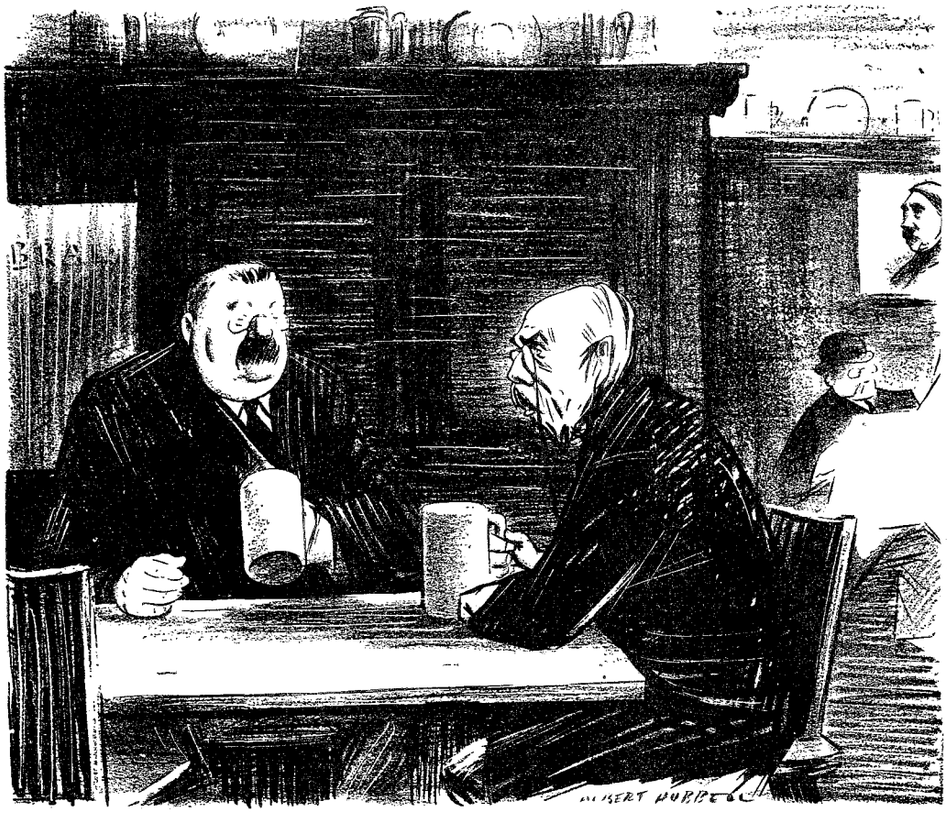

Albert Hubbell

*"Dr. Goebbels has suppressed my 'Community Life of the Ant.' He says ants are un-German collectivists."*

quite a hero of Colonel Orbeta by having him take charge of the situation and put an end to hostilities, whereas the Colonel himself is having a hard time explaining to newspaper reporters why he did *not* arrive on the scene of action before the firing had ceased.

As a matter of fact, the colonel finds the questions of the newspaper reporters extremely embarrassing.

RAMIREZ BRAU: "To what do you attribute the fact that most of the wounded had been shot in the back?"

ORBETA: 'I don't know. . . . Who said that?"

SOLTERO: "*Mundo* reports Dr. Gandara as saying so."

ORBETA: "I don't know; if I had been there, I could tell you how it all happened."

SOLTERO: "And Colonel, what made you ask for the withdrawal of the permit that had been granted to the Nationalists?"

ORBETA: "In the first place, because we are in a very delicate period, since there have been some sentences recently, and passions have been aroused. . . . Moreover, since we have had these sentences of the courts and passions have been aroused, I thought it very prudent to suspend this celebration, since the demonstration, with its military character as set forth in the order with which you are familiar and which was for 'a concentration of forces in Ponce,' was a menace to the public peace. . . . And in order not to appear uncompromising, I told them that the next time they were going to hold one of those parades, that they should call me, and that I myself would help them to make out the program so that it wouldn't appear to be a challenge nor like anything of a military nature, but a civic procession or parade. And we agreed——"

GALLART: "Colonel, and when, during their recent general assembly in Caguas, there was a military parade in which seven hundred members took part, why were not these same orders given?"

ORBETA: "I learned about that later. I knew that there was an assembly. . . . But even if there had been a parade, things weren't as they are now. . . ."

RAMIREZ BRAU: "Who gave the order to use the machine guns?"

ORBETA: "I don't know. Nobody fired any machine guns there. . . ."

SOLTERO: "But, Colonel, in a picture that appeared in the *Mundo,* there is a policeman with a machine gun in his hand."

ORBETA: "Yes. But that photograph was taken half an hour later. What's more, when I was lifting a wounded man from the ground (I don't know whether he was a Nationalist or not), near my car, I turned around and somebody fired a shot from a roof. That is why in the photograph the policemen are watching the roofs."

*Mundo* explains that the conversation was interrupted by the opportune appearance of the governor's publicity secretary, who hurried the bewildered colonel into the safety of the governor's office. The fact of the case is that the picture on the front page of the *Mundo* of Monday, March 22, is labeled: "Sensational photograph taken . . . while the shooting was going on . . ." and one of the policemen in this picture has taken a prone position for firing. He most emphatically is *not* aiming at any roof.

IN analyzing the Palm Sunday massacre of Ponce, there are several things that one must bear in mind. In the first place, Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos and the eight other Nationalist leaders under arrest have appealed their case to the Supreme Court of the United States. Any trouble between the police and the Nationalists will injure the chances that these leaders may be set free, and *Governor Winship does not want these men free.* Furthermore, the provocative tactics used in Ponce are by no means new in Puerto Rico. Last fall, the National Congress for the Liberation of Political Prisoners had planned a non-partisan demonstration in San Juan to protest the imprisonment of the Nationalist leaders. The mayor of the city had given the permit necessary. After all preparations had been made, and some fifty thousand Puerto Ricans were ready to come from all parts of the island to join the protest, Colonel Orbeta wrote to the President of the National Congress that, by order of the governor, the parade would not be permitted, since "the modern tendency, as it is guaranteed by our Organic Art, does not contemplate nor guarantee demonstrations nor public assemblies organized with the object of disturbing peace and order." Of course the parade had been organized as a peaceful demonstration. It was to be led by Roman Catholic and Protestant clergymen; it was to proceed in complete silence; it was to be composed of people of the various political parties; and all of these people realized that violence of any kind would work against the very aim that they had set for themselves: the liberation of the political prisoners. This parade was scheduled for Sunday, September 6. Not until Friday, September 4, did Colonel Orbeta forbid it. And during the intervening Saturday, the government mobilized all available police forces, the National Guard, and the 65th Regiment of the United States Infantry in San Juan. These forces of "law and order" were armed with every conceivable type of war material: rifles, bayonets, revolvers, riot guns, bombs, tear-gas guns, and machine guns. They were strategically posted in those places where the participants in the manifestation would have to pass.

The National Congress saw fit to give up its plans, and thus the governor was unsuccessful in his. At that time many people doubted the word of those who said that the government forces were prepared to fire upon defenseless citizens. The Palm Sunday massacre has completely removed whatever doubts may once have existed in anybody's mind.

The radio reports estimated that fifteen thousand Puerto Ricans attended the funeral ceremonies of the dead Nationalists. After the customary speeches, one of which was made by the mother of a dead man, the crowd raised their fists and swore vengeance for the fallen martyrs.

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# Lines in a Diary

***Our archaeological expert, climbing into his time machine, makes an excursion into the future and turns up a document***

## By Robert Forsythe

THE excavators who were digging around Popocatepetl in 2082 came upon a startling find. It was a box containing a document, bound in white ribbon. On the cover was the inscription: *The Diary of L. Trotsky, né Nuisance.* Evidence proved that it had been buried in this spot some time during the Final World War, which had been almost two years in reaching Mexico, thus giving the writer of the diary ample time to dispose of his possessions, a favor not granted millions in other parts of the world who were destroyed before any formal declaration of hostilities had been made. A perusal of the diary revealed it to have little of historical interest and we are reprinting bits of it here only as a curiosity showing the habits of thought and life in the twentieth century. Trotsky seems to have been a minor politician who had differences with the Soviet Power, carrying his resentment to some length, but affecting the current of history so little that research workers have had difficulty in placing him in the proper years as regards the growth of universal communism.

About all that can be said with conviction about the so-called Trotsky is that he was a persistent traveler. As will be seen from the notations in the diary, he lived in many sections of Europe before coming to Mexico. The main interest will arise from this point, the passages in the diary having of themselves little value for a present-day reader. We list what seem to be the most colorful items of the strange document:

PARIS, JUNE 15—Did not see Romm today. Very cloudy and damp.

OSLO, MAY 30—Down at the airport watching no planes from Germany coming in.

PRINKIPO, AUGUST 3—Did not meet Romm today.

BERLIN, SEPT. 6—Down watching excavations for new Hotel Bristol. Always liked the old place. Can't understand why they changed. Lovely weather.

OSLO, JULY 3—Have just heard of trial in Moscow of Zinoviev and Kamenev. Obviously a frame-up. They are trying to involve me, as if I would stoop to conspiracy. Predict they will be let off with light sentence after lies.

SOUTHERN FRANCE, DEC. 14—Did not see Romm today. Wrote a lot of letters, but not one to Radek.

OSLO, AUGUST 5—Zinoviev and Kamenev have been shot. Double-cross. Had been promised immunity for confessions. Were shot when world opinion became agitated. Showers all morning.

PARIS, DEC. 21—Did not write my son, Sedov, today. Just thought of evidence which would have saved Zinoviev and Kamenev. Saving it for my next book.

Joe Bartlett

*Plumed Serpent*

GENEVA, JAN. 2—Did not see Romm today.

OSLO, JAN. 14—Very amusing. Radek and Pyatakov have confessed to treason and wrecking in Moscow. Seek to involve me, as if I would stoop to conspiracy. Could end this farce in a minute if I wanted to tell what I knew. Saving it for next book. Did not see Romm today.

OSLO, JAN. 15—Romm in Moscow at trial. Muralov confesses to treason, implicates me. If everybody knew what I know. . . . What a joke, that Moscow trial. Predict defendants will be let off with light sentence after proper lies.

OSLO, JAN. 20—What a superb jest on the part of Pyatakov and Muralov! Have allowed themselves to be shot. Impression on outside world will be great. A classic example of revenge.

OSLO, JAN. 25—Working hard on next book.

AT SEA, FEB. 12.—Very peaceful.

MEXICO, FEB. 15—Think it would be better to have direct wire into New York *Times.* Would save time. Considering it.

MEXICO, MARCH 2—Great joke on me! Find I have never known Romm, never even heard of him. Working on book.

The diary breaks off at this point and is not renewed for years, the stay in Mexico being so permanent that Trotsky evidently was not stirred to write. There are occasional references later to: "Comrades from United States visited today," but he seemed so little impressed by his callers that he never felt called upon to comment. A few business transactions are included, such as: "Cheque today from *American Mercury;* cheque today from *Saturday Review of Literature,*" but they are to be regarded merely as a statement of his financial condition rather than proper material for a diary. The same may be said of his repeated admonitions to himself: "Must write another article on collapse of Socialism in Soviet Union." This keeps cropping up in the remaining pages of the document, and seems to have been the work which most completely occupied his time, but it scarcely seems important in this day of complete socialization.

However, the last statements have proved to be of some interest to philologists. The individuals mentioned in the diary have been forgotten, if they were ever known, but the meaning of the word "collapse" a hundred and fifty years ago has proved baffling to experts. It is well known that the usage of words changes with the passage of time, but there is no evidence that a complete reversal of meaning should have occurred in the sole case of this particular word. One may only assume that it was a code expression used by the diarist to prevent any possible charge that he might be using his literary work for conspiratorial purposes.

Apart from the fact that he appears to have been a jolly man well pleased with a laugh even at his own expense, little can be learned of Trotsky's character from his own work. It seems that he was in great demand as a writer by what was called in those days the "capitalistic" press, and it is apparent that he was a faithful contributor, but beyond that nothing of importance is known. He seems to have lived his life out in quiet and peace, hard at work on evidence which he was preparing for what he was pleased to call an "international commission." Just what the commission was or how it was expected to function does not appear, but the lone personal reference at the end of the diary indicates that it was a project which was close to his heart.

"Working hard on evidence [he wrote], but will not be rushed into telling all. Am saving it for next book."

The end seems to have come before he had an opportunity to finish it.

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# Finland's "New Deal"

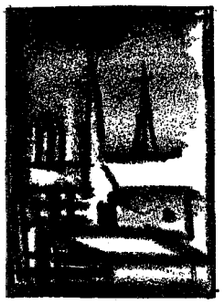
***Interviews with the new Finnish foreign minister and with Antikainen indicate some important changes in orientation***

## By F. Elwyn Jones

We National-Socialists deliberately put a full-stop to Germany's pre-war foreign policy. We begin where Germany left off 600 years ago. We are stopping the eternal German migration to the south and west of Europe and are directing our glance to the land in the East. We are at last winding up the colonial and commercial policy of the pre-war period and passing to the land policy of the future. When, however, we speak in Europe today of new land and new soil, we can only be thinking primarily of Russia and her subject border countries. —HITLER in *Mein Kampf.*

THE visit to Moscow of Mr. Holsti, Finland's foreign minister, has given much encouragement to anti-fascists in northern Europe. Until this year, Europe has taken it for granted that Finland was body and soul inside the Nazi camp. Now, under Holsti, Finland shows signs of a real change.

I interviewed Mr. Holsti a few days after his return from Moscow, and he made it clear to me that his journey had commercial and political objects. "During the course of the last four years," he said, "the volume of Russian imports from Finland has fallen considerably, and Finnish exporters are as anxious as the government to restore the normal course of trade with our neighbor." The knowledge that the violently anti-Soviet capitalists of Finland had at last decided that the U.S.S.R. is a good thing commercially no doubt encouraged Mr. Holsti on his way to Moscow.



A. Ajay

Mr. Holsti told me: "I had the opportunity for frank talks with the members of the Soviet cabinet and with Marshal Voroshilov and his colleagues on the general staff. I wanted to dispel the anxieties felt in Moscow that Finland had made secret arrangements with a great power whereby Finland should be the jumping-off ground for an attack on the U.S.S.R."

The anxieties felt in Moscow are based on Nazi plans of expansion in the Baltic. These plans were first worked out by General Hoffmann, and involve a threefold attack on Leningrad by land, sea, and air. Hoffmann was in charge of Germany's eastern campaign, and directed the defeat of the Czar's army at Tannenberg during the Great War. His view was that if Napoleon had had railways, motor vehicles, and telephones in 1812 "he would still be in Moscow today."

Hitler was one of the earliest supporters of this plan, and *Mein Kampf* is full of it. Nazi publicists have taken it up. On June 1, 1934, Goering's newspaper, the Essen *National-Zeitung,* stated:

We must begin again where four centuries ago the old territorially bound trade of the Hansa was interrupted. . . . The countries of the Baltic form a community with the same destiny. . . The southeastern area of Europe must again come into contact with the northeastern, and with the district of the North Sea and the Baltic. *The circle must one day be closed over Russia.* It is incontestably to the credit of the Foreign Office of the Nazi Party that it has made in this respect proposals and plans which already today are in process of execution.

This Nazi Foreign Office is run by Alfred Rosenberg, a Balt who left Russia for Germany after the Civil War. He is a fanatical anti-Bolshevik, and is the chief inspirer of the Nazi system of propaganda and espionage which is as active in the Baltic as it is in the rest of Europe.

The Nazi line is to sing the praises of the "greatest era of Germanism," namely, from 1200 A.D. to 1600—the period of the ascendancy of the Order of Teutonic Knights and of the Hanseatic League over the Baltic. In each of the Baltic countries—creatures of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty imposed by imperialist Germany on Russia with a view to making it vulnerable—Nazi propaganda is widely distributed by Nazi agents and the extreme fascist movements are financed and organized from Berlin. Against Lithuania a ceaseless campaign has been carried on by Germany over the Memel question and the Nazis have shown their readiness to strike when the time comes.

THE FASCIST MOVEMENT in Finland is strong in the army and the universities. There are fascist youth organizations, White Karelian organizations, etc. But the chief strength of the fascists is in the Lappo movement. This is led by a Baron Mannerheim, who has been a creature of German imperialism ever since the war. It was he who led the White counter-revolution in his country against the Russian and the Finnish workers and peasants, and, in doing so, slaughtered more than ten thousand Finnish revolutionaries. In 1918 he was prepared to betray Finnish independence to such an extent as to march on Helsingfors with an expeditionary force of German officers in order to make the German Prince Karl of Hesse king of the country. He has maintained his contacts with Berlin since that time, and his Lappo movement receives systematic backing from his supporters in Hitler Germany.

The Lappo fascists have a good record for terrorism. They kidnapped the liberal president of Finland along with his wife, and in 1932 culminated a series of kidnappings with an attempted coup d'état. The army, however, remained loyal, and the coup d'état failed. The Lappo movement now calls itself the I.K.L. (Patriotic People's Party), and contents itself for the moment with constitutional methods to achieve power.

The fascists are now boycotting Mr. Holsti with all their power, and it remains to be seen how far the new democratic government of Finland will take a resolute stand against them. Under the recent reactionary president, Svinhufvud, the fascists were given almost a free hand, and democratic liberties were attacked. The new president Kallio—described in his party's press as a simple peasant (he is in fact a director of the Bank of Finland) —owes his position to Social Democratic support, and it is to be hoped that the new government will restore the democratic liberties that have been destroyed.

Fascists in Finland were no more upset than their German paymasters by Holsti's Moscow journey—I shall not soon forget the look of depression on the face of the Nazi journalist whom I met in the hall of the Finnish foreign office just after he had interviewed the foreign minister.

SIGNIFICANT, perhaps, of the new democratic spirit in Finnish politics is the fact that I was allowed to interview Antikainen, known throughout Europe as the "Dimitrov of the North," in his prison cell. The Antikainen case is a hangover from the days of deadlock between Finland and the U.S.S.R. Its history starts in 1921, when the White Finns attacked the autonomous Soviet state in Karelia. During this campaign, Antikainen was put in charge of a body of troops who traveled on skis, carrying all their stores on their backs. He and his cohorts crossed the enemy line, and, after a historic all-night journey on skis, surprised and completely routed the general staff of the enemy some thirty-five miles behind the front line. This was a decisive battle which ended the war, and the White Finns withdrew from Karelia. Antikainen was awarded high military honors and became a great hero in the U.S.S.R.

In 1934, Antikainen returned to Finland. He was soon arrested and sentenced to eight years imprisonment for high treason. Not content with this sentence, the fascists demanded further punishment, and last year

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Antikainen was sentenced to penal servitude for life on the fantastic charge of having roasted a Finn alive between the bayonets of the Red Army on a camp fire in 1921. The foreign correspondents and lawyers who attended the trial reported on the unsatisfactory nature of the evidence, and a series of remarkable incidents culminated in Matvejev, called for the defense, giving evidence *against* Antikainen. The next day this mystery was cleared when Matvejev escaped from the police and reached the Soviet legation in Helsingfors. There he reported that he had been terrorized into committing perjury.

The cabinet ministers with whom I discussed Antikainen's case told me that the government would not interfere with the independent Supreme Court, which will shortly be considering Antikainen's appeal. In the Antikainen case it is clear that if the matter is treated juridically, then the Supreme Court will have no alternative but to acquit him. The Antikainen appeal will, indeed, be a test of the integrity of the new Finnish regime. I was allowed to make a close investigation of the Helsingfors Central Prison. It was reassuring to find the conditions in the prison satisfactory. There was a relatively humane atmosphere which is rare on the Continent — there were none of the machine guns that confronted me at the entrance to the Rossauerländer Prison in Vienna, nor the soldiers that dominate the German jails. In one respect the prison was better than anything England can show: while prisoners have to work ten hours a day, they are paid for the work they do.

Antikainen was busy making a mat when I was conducted to his cell. He looked rather thin, and older than his years. I talked to him through the prison commissioner in German, and he soon showed that his spirit was good and his wit unblunted. He said he had no serious complaints to make of his treatment. He hated most the solitary confinement —three years he had already spent in those few square yards of cell in that prison gallery. He said he was allowed to read books from the prison library. I asked him if it was a good library. He said "Yes, a very good library . . . of books published fifteen years ago." He had in his cell Dostoievsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and an economics treatise which was in fact fifteen years old.

That scene in Antikainen's cell is the most vivid memory I have of my Finnish journey —more vivid even than the ships I saw from the window of my plane, locked in the white and frozen Baltic, or the gilded room at the Finnish foreign office, from which, as the foreign minister told me, "the Czar's governor over Finland used twenty years ago to organize the oppression of the Finnish people."

*William Green—Trade-Union Theoretician*

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# Covering the News

*Covering the events of the week ending March 29, 1937*

ALTHOUGH John L. Lewis was momentarily absent, attending a mine conference in New York, negotiations between Walter P. Chrysler, auto tycoon, and the United Automobile Workers were still in progress as this issue went to press. Fortifying the union was labor's amazing show of its own strength in Detroit, where 150,000 workers demonstrated against employer-police violence. Any attempt to attack sit-down strikes, the huge throng threatened, would be met with a general strike. The demonstration was timed to lend power to the truce arrived at between Chrysler and C.I.O. chief Lewis, by the terms of which the 6000 auto sit-downers evacuated the Chrsyler plants on the guarantee that they would remain unoperated for the duration of the negotiations. The emerging sit-downers appeared behind their own brass bands, carrying blankets and foodstuffs, to be hailed like a conquering army by other union men and by their wives and children.

With the power of the sit-down strike amply demonstrated in Detroit and in dozens of other cities, reactionary groups opened their offensive against labor during the week, with special attacks leveled against "Reds" and sit-down strikes. Leading the Red-baiting procession was the American Legion of Michigan, which launched what it declared was "a nation-wide drive against Communists and other subversive movements." The first Legion blast was fired by Homer Chaillaux, the organization's "national Americanism director," who denounced individuals and organizations indiscriminately, lumping together Communists, Socialists, liberals, progressives, and the mildest of the mild members of the "deplorer's club." He was followed by Guy M. Cox, Michigan commander of the Legion, who declared the sit-down strike "bordered on a state of virtual anarchy." The people, said the anxious commander, must see to it that "public authority is preserved and the rights of property respected."

Equally sinister was the telegram sent to Vice-President Garner and the Senate by a group of Boston "civic leaders, industrialists, and financiers" headed by A. Lawrence Lowell, president emeritus of Harvard University. Prompt federal action to stop sit-down strikes was called for by the Bostonians in a message worded even more frantically than the Red-baiting American Legion speeches. This was one of the few occasions in which Lowell occupied a news spotlight since his part in the legal murder of Sacco and Vanzetti.

Chiming in with the Legionnaires and the Boston financiers was treacherous and pitiful A.F. of L. President William Green, who repeated all the attacks made by enemies of labor against the sit-down. "The public generally," said Green, "will not long tolerate the illegal seizure of property." Charge by charge, Green's words were echoes of those uttered by the jingo and Liberty League groups. But he was roundly denounced by John L. Lewis, who declared that the A.F. of L. leader's words were "characteristically cowardly and contemptible. . . . He again sells his own breed down the river and receives the thanks of the National Association of Manufacturers."

IN Washington the sit-downs all but supplanted the Court fight as the major topic of discussion. Particularly did the storm swirl about the head of Secretary of Labor Perkins, who was accused by Representative McCormack (D., Mass.) of making "inciting remarks" in furtherance of the sit-down movement. "The Labor Department under her leadership," said the labor-baiting congressman, "has not as yet earned my confidence." Apparently rattled by the charge, Madam Perkins made haste to assure McCormack that there was no subversive intention in her statement of several weeks ago, which gave rise to the representative's remark. The statement in question was the Secretary's comment that "the legality of the sit-down method has not yet been determined by the courts." Since then, she explained to McCormack, "the Michigan courts have taken final action in ordering the evacuation of plants, and I have never questioned that these decrees were within the competent jurisdiction of these courts."

In what may have been intended as a reply to reckless charges by Senator Holt (D., W. Va.), Madam Perkins denied that the sit-downs constituted a revolutionary movement. Lashing out wildly, young Holt, never noted for stability, let alone accuracy, attacked the C.I.O. as "a Communist-inspired order" having as "its underlying principle" the "ultimate overthrow of the American form of government." Said Secretary Perkins: "There is no movement in this country that is deliberately fomenting and using the sit-down method."

*Madame Perkins—She squirmed*

While the Secretary of Labor squirmed and attempted to apologize for the sit-down wave as "sporadic and accidental," her cabinet colleague from the Commerce Department viciously attacked the movement. "Nothing is more provocative of grave consequences to both labor and business," said Mr. Roper, "than the flagrant disregard of private property rights through open defiance of the authority of the courts and the over-riding of the sacredness of law and order." But nothing said either in administration or congressional circles was a match for the action of Representative Dies (D., Tex.), who proposed to deal with sit-downs as violations of the federal anti-trust laws. The Dies bill would provide fines up to $5000 for sit-downers, or imprisonment up to one year.

WHILE reactionaries clamored for presidential action to end the sit-down threat to industrial autocracy, administration circles made it plain that nothing would be done until a decision was forthcoming from the Supreme Court on the Wagner Labor Relations Act. After a two-week recess, during which it was generally believed that this decision was in the throes of production, the Court met and disappointed the country once more. It did, however, hand down three other decisions, and all three were New Deal victories.

Unanimously the Court upheld provisions of the railway labor act which require the roads to engage in collective bargaining with their workers in cases of industrial dispute. Likewise unanimous was the decision approving the revised Frazier-Lemke farm mortgage moratorium act. The third government victory was a five-to-four verdict for the Washington law establishing minimum wages for women. This decision, handed down by Chief Justice Hughes, was in direct contradiction to previous decisions of the Court in connection with minimum wage laws in the District of Columbia, New York, Arkansas, and Arizona. The District of Columbia decision, said Hughes, "should be, and it is, overruled." The railway decision was held in some quarters to point to a victory for the Wagner act, since it includes in its scope even those "back shop" employees who have no direct relationship to interstate transportation. On the other hand, the fact that no decision was handed down on the Wagner act itself pointed to complications in that case which were not present in the railroad case and which still left a distinct possibility of invalidation.

FOR the first time in its entire history, the Socialist Party found it necessary to hold a closed convention as a result of recent unprecedented factional struggle. Control was gained by a coalition of Trotskyists and their allies, identified with the Tyler-Zam faction;

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as a result, the convention tried to gloss over the Trotskyist endorsement of strike-breaker Tom Latimer for mayor of Minneapolis; adopted a resolution backing the farmer-labor party movement in principle, but added a nullifying rider; and gave the Trotskyist sympathizers a majority on the new national executive committee headed by Norman Thomas.

THE eighth week of the battle over court reform was marked by a defense of the President's plan by the only former member of the Court now living, and by the opposition of one of the President's early advisers. Former Justice John H. Clarke found the Roosevelt program "clearly constitutional" and expressed the belief that the founding fathers had "more confidence in the wisdom and patriotism of the Congresses and the Presidents which were to come after them, and less confidence in courts than some seem to have today." The early Roosevelt adviser who took the stand against the plan was Raymond Moley, who pressed exclusively for an amendment. In general it was felt that time was working with the President, and there was accordingly no attempt on the part of the administration to hurry matters. "A man would have to have a leaky brain-pan to hurry when time is his ally" was the way Senator Ashurst (D., Ariz.) put the matter. The week closed with a joint radio plea on behalf of the court enlargement plan by the governors of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and South Carolina.

Low point of the Congressional week was the introduction of a new child-labor amendment by the one-time liberal Senator Wheeler of Montana. Following the most reactionary technique, Wheeler's bill would throw the question into the laps of the forty-eight state legislatures, providing merely that goods made by child labor would be barred by the federal government from transportation into states which prohibit the practice. Wheeler's was one of three new child-labor amendments proposed during the week. Of the other two, Senator Borah's would reduce the age limit from eighteen, as provided in the amendment now making the rounds of the state legislatures, to 14; while Senator Vandenberg's would compromise at 16 and eliminate the word "regulate," which has been the stated basis of Catholic Church opposition.

The week's congressional high was hit by Senator Nye of North Dakota, who introduced a resolution calling on the State Department for an opinion on whether or not Italy and Germany were in a state of war with the loyalist government of Spain. The Nye request was admittedly designed to bring about an arms embargo on the two fascist countries. "The more displeasure that can be voiced around the world about certain countries," said Nye, "the quicker will be the conviction of some of those countries that their leadership is getting on thin ice." Indignant at the Nye suggestion, Senator Pittman (D., Nev.) ignored the week's news from Europe entirely to assert: "There isn't the slightest evidence that the Italian government, as a government, is doing anything in the Spanish civil war."

Joe Bartlett

*Stalin—Assessed Trotskyism*

EASTER brought no peace to millions of embattled Spaniards, but their outlook for ultimate victory over the invaders from Italy and Germany appeared distinctly brighter as a result of signal victories north and south of Madrid. After its defeat on the Guadalajara front, the insurgent high command turned its attention to the region north of Cordoba for a drive against Almaden, site of valuable mercury mines. The loyalists rushed reinforcements to Pozoblanco, five miles south of Almaden; after fierce fighting, the rebel siege of Almaden was broken; the ensuing loyalist victory, this time against 10,000 Italians, was described as a "second Guadalajara." Observers declared that the loyalist air fleet has definitely established preëminence in the air. Another promising factor was the reëmergence of the loyalist fleet after months of inactivity to shell Málaga, Motril, and Melilla. One result of these successes was an influx of 150,000 new men into the loyalist battalions. So experienced an observer as Ernest Hemingway cabled that the battle which resulted in the rout of the Italian "volunteers" at Brihuega was "fought on a World War scale of organization." The Italian retreat was so disorderly that demoralization set in and many "volunteers" were literally shot in the back by commanding officers; their riddled corpses were found strewn along the Aragon highway by the advancing loyalists. A United Press correspondent reported that Italian prisoners in Madrid told him: "None of us wanted to fight and we will be glad when it is all over."

The military disaster which overtook the Italian "volunteers" had serious diplomatic repercussions when Ambassador Dino Grandi told the London Non-Intervention Committee that Mussolini refused to discuss the question of withdrawing his men from Spain. In reply, Soviet delegate Ivan M. Maisky denounced the Italian action as "the most flagrant case of foreign intervention ever known in history." Both Paris and London sat tight, though vague reports emanated from the Quai d'Orsay that the French government was fed up with Italian stalling and would take "independent action"—nature unknown. Of potentially greater importance were reports from Rome that the Italian people were also getting fed up with Mussolini's drive for empire. The New York *Herald Tribune* correspondent in Rome, John T. Whitaker, cabled that "the dispatch of the 'totalitarian volunteers' to Spain has brought more open criticism of the regime than foreigners usually hear in Italy. The extraordinarily strong position of the dictator may be weakened seriously if fresh divisions are shipped to Spain, and the crisis would be aggravated by League action."

The Non-Intervention Committee was also faced with a note to the British government from Spanish Foreign Minister Julio Alvarez del Vayo stating that his government, "no matter what the consequences, will not tolerate any interference with boats flying her flag . . . no matter what the nature of the cargo on board." Indirectly connected with Mussolini's reverses in Spain was the economic and political pact rushed through between Italy and Yugoslavia. Conflicting interpretations prevailed as to the significance of the pact, with some observers viewing it as an Italian thrust against the Little Entente, previously oriented around France. Other observers interpreted the pact as a retreat by Mussolini from his policy of "coördinating" Yugoslavia with Italy.

THE international labor movement took one big step forward in Mexico and an equally big step backward in Great Britain. President Lázaro Cárdenas of Mexico gave his support to a far-reaching electoral reform which will henceforth make possible the election of workers and poor farmers to the Mexican legislature. It was predicted that one third of the next legislature will represent the Confederation of Mexican Workers, headed by Vicente Lombardo Toledano. On the other hand, the leaders of the British Labor Party issued an ultimatum to Sir Stafford Cripps and other members of the Socialist League, giving them two months to break their united front with the British Communist Party and the Independent Labor Party on pain of expulsion. The Socialist League was recently "disaffiliated" from the Labor Party for entering into the Unity Campaign Committee to achieve a united working-class front in Great Britain.

More inspiring news came from the Soviet Union, where figures spoke eloquently of increasing well-being for the masses. The number of workers in the U.S.S.R. rose from 12,000,000 in 1926 to 26,000,000 today; wages rose from 8,000,000,000 rubles in 1928 to 71,000,000,000 today. Stalin's speech at the recent session of the Communist Central Committee was released; the Soviet leader declared that "Trotskyism ceased to be a political current in the working class, as it was seven or eight years ago; Trotskyism turned into a frantic, unprincipled band of wreckers, diversionists, spies, and murderers, acting upon instructions of the foreign intelligence service organs of foreign states."

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# American Fighters in Spain

***Vivas from the people and bombs from the fascist airmen are only part of the tumult of impressions gathered moving up to the front***

## By an American Anti-Fascist Volunteer

THROUGH the train window the picturesque countryside of eastern Spain looked like a colored movie travelogue. Red-tinted clouds, low over the mountains, greeted us as we sang American songs on our way to our mobilization point. At every train-stop, ruddy-faced peasants rushed to the train and showered oranges, bread, and sausages into our waiting hands. This part of the country is famous for its orange groves. We could almost pick them off the trees from our passing train. Wine seems more plentiful than water here, and it is said to be more healthful, so the boys are keeping healthy—but not too healthy. The villages, nestled on the mountain slopes, look unreal, like Hollywood villages. We have passed four castles situated on high bluffs; it is time to sing songs about castles in Spain.

The piping voices of the village children shouting *"Salud"* touch you. As soon as a child is able to toddle around, it seems, he is also able to clench his tiny fist in the *Frente Popular* salute. An inspiring picture was a lone peasant, on his little plot of land, his plow beside him, giving us the *Frente Popular* salute and shouting at the top of his husky lungs, *"Viva Americanos!"* We responded to that with *"Viva España!"*

The reception we received by the villagers when they were told we were Americans was something to remember. An Anarchist army commander, with tears flowing from his eyes unashamed, poured forth his gratitude. It was astounding and wonderful to him that Americans, the "rich" Americans, should come all the way from their comfortable homes to help defeat fascism in Spain. This was probably what most of the villagers felt about us.

At our first stop-over for the night, we were quartered with about five hundred men who had come from every conceivable place on the globe: Germans, Italians, Greeks, Arabs, American and Cuban Negroes, Chinese, and, interestingly enough, a Palestine Jew who had spent his last cent to come here. That night we marched into a large hall in the village and every group represented had to sing a song. The effect was superb. We heard revolutionary songs of the Greeks, the Arabs, the Italians, and the Austrians. The Arab comrade was the most popular of all. He sang, clapped his hands, and danced at the same time. His wailing, rhythmic cadence had all of us clapping hands and shaking hips.

There were eight Austrians with us who had skied all the way from their country, across the mountains, for ten days. Four of their party, including a woman medical student, had either been shot or captured by the border guards. There was a young German Communist who had escaped from a concentration camp. That night he sang a prison song, the "Peat-Bog Soldiers." He was about nineteen and had light golden hair. He looked like a little boy, but his voice was heavy and low. He was striking back at fascism, and was happy.

Four women were quartered with us, ate the same food, and roughed it with the men. Three were French nurses on their way to join the International Brigade, and the fourth was a Swiss chemist who was there with her brother, father, and grandfather! She explained seriously to one of the boys that were her mother alive, she would have been there too. She said simply, "Could one of us go and leave the other? All of us love freedom. All of us must fight."

At Valencia we met the first trainload of refugees from Málaga. They were a pitiful sight. Old, toothless men, ragged women and children, and young boys—not a young man amongst them. They told us of a terrible slaughter by the fascist troops. Our boys made a collection, and a few hundred pesetas were given to the refugees. The International Red Aid was on the job, however, right at

*Those Who Always Pay* Lithograph by Georges Schreiber

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the station, feeding the stricken people while accommodation for them was being arranged. Many a Yankee tongue spat forth profane abuse of the fascists who had done this to Málaga. It was then that we composed our fighting song, now sung by the entire American battalion at the front. It was composed by four Americans and two Canadians, and is sung to the tune of some American college song. If possible, I shall try to have the music written out and sent to America. It has a marvelous swing, and when we march to it our chests swell, our hands swing proudly, and our voices shout it defiantly.

We march, we Americans,
To defend our working class,
To uphold democracy
And mow the fascists down like grass;
We're marching to victory,
Our hearts are set, our fists are clenched,
A cause like ours can't help but win,
The fascists' steel will bend like tin,
We give our word they shall not pass,
*No pasaran!*
*We give our word they shall not pass!*

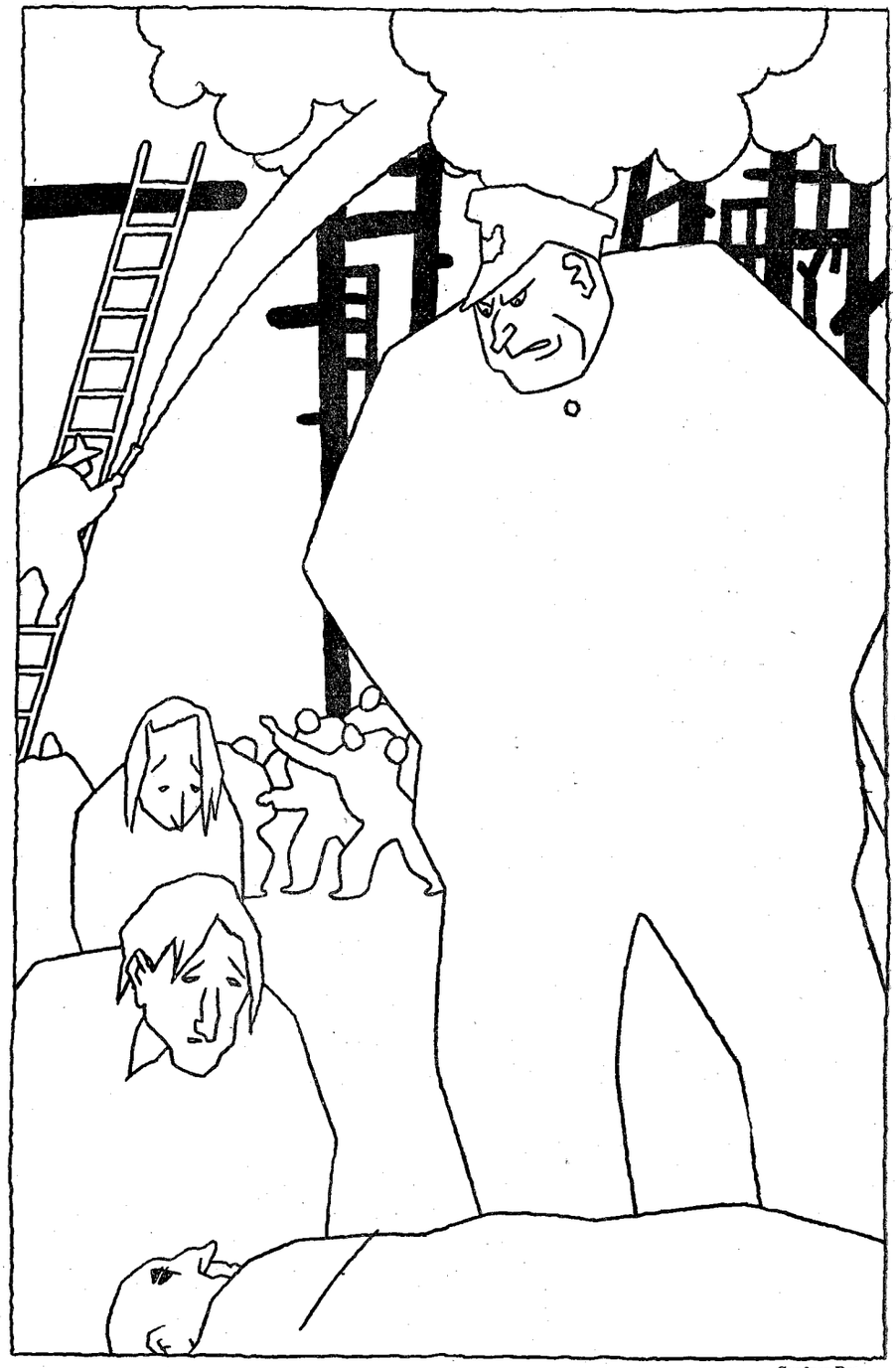
At our base we learned that we would act as the reserve for the American battalion already in action. We drilled in a bull-ring, and it was here that we saw our first Spanish bull-fight, American style. The automobile worker from Detroit painted a swastika on a white handkerchief, and the actor from Boston panted and snorted and charged. The actor tore the hated insignia to shreds, and the matador, together with the rest of us, gave three cheers.

The night before we left for our final training ground, we were treated to a bombing party by a fleet of fascist planes, probably from Málaga. The whine and roar were terrifying to us rookies, but when the American commandant asked for volunteers for rescue work in the villages, twenty of us stepped forward. Back home we had seen the pictures of dead Spanish children, but here, rushing through the streets with the drone of the planes above us, crouching low near a wall to escape the shower of glass and stone, and then digging out three dead babes from beneath the ruins of a house, gave us our first real hard swallow of this war. A little boy shrieked hysterically for his mother and father, buried beneath the ruins of something that was once his home. A cruel joke: the dining room was intact and all the family pictures remained on the walls. On one side was the picture of the father in his wedding clothes; on the other, the smiling face of the mother in her bridal gown. We worked on the ruins for three hours, but could not find the bodies. Another rescue squad relieved us and began where we left off.

A bomb dropped a few hundred feet away and we all fell prone on the ground. That horrible whine, that terrific impact made our knees quiver. We tried to joke about it, but all of us were angry. Here was some fascist aviator, up in the dark heavens, dropping bombs on people who couldn't see to fight back. And the people who were killed were innocent civilians. How many people were killed in that four-hour bombardment I do not know. One of the doctors said about twelve. The fascist aviators (they came in relays) must have been cockeyed. Out of one hundred and twenty bombs, only four made direct hits. The American commandant, who knew I had done newspaper work, said grimly, "Well, here's your story." He had organized the rescue work, and went around the place throughout the bombardment as if it were raining raindrops instead of bombs.

Before leaving for our final training ground, we were addressed by the French commandant, whose speech was translated into four different languages. He spoke briefly. There were two things he asked from us: proletarian discipline and the erasing of political differences during the time we were fighting our common enemy. There was no need, he said, to explain the situation, because had we not known it, we would not have been there. We couldn't lose, he said, but our sacrifices would have to be many. The bull-ring thundered to the shouts of "Red Front!" in four languages, and we marched to our waiting train.

Through the streets the villagers raised their fists and cheered madly. The night's bombardment seemed to have had no effect upon their morale. The American song rang through the dusty air and, as the train got under way, a mighty, *"No pasaran—we give our word they shall not pass!"* rose to the Spanish heavens from the lips of Americans prepared to die for freedom and democracy. Our train gathered speed. We waved our final good-bys to the villagers. In ten hours we would be at the front. It felt good.



Gardner Rea

*"What's the yip? Didn't I say there'd be an inquiry?"*

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# André Gide on the Soviet Union

***The famous Frenchman's need for jumping to opposites may explain his indiscipline***

## By Paul Nizan

IN his little book, *Return from the U.S.S.R.,* André Gide sought to define the politics, the culture, and the folkways of 170 million people.

It is astounding that Gide, who supported his opinions on the Congo timber companies by such prudent factual verification, should so hastily hand down a verdict against the Soviet Union which puts it somewhat below Hitler Germany.

Are we to believe that Gide obeyed that famous "diversity of sentiment which forces me, once having finished a book, to leap to the opposite extreme of myself (through a need for balance) and write precisely that which is least capable of pleasing the readers won for me by the preceding work?"

We can quite well understand the value of paradoxes and what they contribute to the fine arts; but I find it more difficult to understand their value for a political writer, as Gide, whether he so desired it or not, has become.

"The U.S.S.R.," writes Gide, "is in 'construction,' and this should be repeated constantly."

A correct analysis would have required Gide to remember that the U.S.S.R. is a changing world—but he forgets this in almost every page and describes the U.S.S.R. as a world which no longer changes, where everything has been completed, where history is at an end.

Neither was psychology the best avenue of approach. This is the least reliable of the sciences, especially when it does not base itself upon objective data. And psychology requires a patience and leisure seldom at the disposal of the visitor. In this respect, Gide is not on solid ground.

"Only psychological questions are within my grasp," he writes. Agreed. But he should not then proceed to render psychological verdicts on this "forest" of social questions in which Gide himself feels that he is lost—in which he did lose himself. He says further: "Economic questions are beyond my abilities." True. But they are not beyond his ambitions. For he passes judgment on economic and social questions after extremely hasty psychological inquiries, which omit the peculiarities, the diversity, the varied psychological "epochs" of a country where they are more numerous than anywhere else.

THIS FAILURE of Gide's method becomes evident when he undertakes to resolve the problem of Soviet trade or productivity of labor. He deplores the lack of taste in most Soviet manufactured goods, explicable by the difficulty of rapidly organizing a highly skilled group of producers, the delay in achieving satisfactory collaboration between engineer and planner, the requirements of mass production at particular stages.

Similarly, it is not enough to use some classical notions of Russian literature for interpreting certain phases of Soviet life. To explain the problems of labor productivity by "Russian indolence" is to disregard all the real elements involved in the problem of training skilled workers or the technical backwardness of the unskilled. Gide might have found a rigorous explanation of this question in a famous article by Lenin on labor productivity. Let us not confuse the *Oblomovtschina* of the '40s with the state of Russian economy before the October Revolution.

Gide's psychological assertions are hardly proven. His example of the Soviet "superiority complex" sums up the matter. Recourse to Gogol-like boasting, in that modern garb, the superiority complex, does not explain facts, and does not give one the right to generalize, especially when the facts are taken from the lives of children. It is quite true, of course, that Soviet citizens often boast. They have a right to boast, considering what had to be done and what they have already done. But Soviet citizens scorn the foreigner far less than Gide imagines. Different experiences might just as well have brought him to the conclusion that the Russians suffer from an inferiority complex. But Gide explains boasting, which he prefers to consider general, by the systematic keeping of the Soviet citizen in ignorance of foreign events. He claims that the Soviet people were not told about the Paris subway and could thus boast about their own.

Arthur Getz

But what are the actual facts? The wall newspapers of Moscow were for many months full of stories, photographs, and sketches of the foreign subways; the whole of Moscow knew that the builders of their subways were experimenting on the four branches of the Sokolniki line with the methods employed in the subways of Paris, London, New York, and Berlin.

Very excellent Soviet newspapers inform the public on foreign events, *Za Rubezhom, Vokrug Tsvet,* and others, not to speak of the technical magazines in which one reads only about Detroit, Billancourt, etc., and the books which are being translated. Indeed, the Russians not only translate Aragon and André Gide, but also reactionaries like Francois Mauriac and Drieu la Rochelle.

All of this seems of serious import to me, since it is a question of proving facts, and Gide's "facts" are false or incomplete.

No one doubts that Gide met ignorant persons. But M. Jacques Bardoux, of the French Institute, once wrote that New York is the capital of the United States, and André Gide himself writes that Bolshevo was founded on the initiative of Gorky six years ago—both the "fact" and the date are wrong.

It is true that success sometimes intoxicates Soviet citizens when they compare the terrible past of their country with its present. Gide fails to make this necessary comparison because he is concerned less with historical perspectives than with geographical analogies. But it was not Gide who gave the first warning signal. "Superiority complex" in contemporary Russian is known as "dizziness from success," a phrase coined by Stalin.

NOT EVERYTHING in Gide's book is false, but almost everything is badly interpreted through a lack of real knowledge. It is true that there are some poor people in the U.S.S.R., but there are far less of them than in 1933. Gide should have given up an hour with the souls of men and spent it with statistics. It is still true that Soviet civilization is hard and that many people there lack the philanthropic spirit. But how can Gide, who appeals so glibly to the history of revolutionary Russia, neglect to consider that history when it is a question of defining one of its struggles?

Again, it was not Gide who brought attention to this fact. It was Stalin who told the following story to show that the heritage of callousness had to be overcome: One day in Siberia peasants, floating logs, let a man drown without trying to save him. They later said to Stalin, then in exile: "If it had been a

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horse. . . . But a man! . . . A man can be made again, but you can't make a horse. . . ."

These mistakes in perspective lie at the heart of the verdict on "conformism" and the "Stalin dictatorship."

I have no doubt that Gide met cowards, perfectly base and sordid people. I myself know some. I can tell you their names. And the stories of the *svetlie sovietskie* and the *Torgsin* babies. I know them too. Better than Gide does. I am not impressed by the details about a "new" bourgeoisie; it is the old one defending itself. The Trotskyites say it is inconceivable that if the kulaks are liquidated as a class, as we say, they should still be fought individually. Did Gide see one evening in the Ukraine the anger of the team harvesters who discovered that a "de-kulaked" kulak in their midst had spilled gasoline into their soup?

Joe Bartlett

The fight is not yet over. One of the forms of battle is the series of small offensives of the wives of engineers, of writers who dream of Paris, people like the sabotaging engineer who dreamed of the White Sea canal and said:

"I'm going to send my girls to be educated in the West. . . . There is still nothing like education in the West. . . ."

At the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, one of the objectives assigned to the Second Five-Year Plan was the liquidation of the vestiges of capitalism in the minds of men. These cannot die in a day; they take on disguises; they proclaim loudly that Stalin is truly the "leader and the teacher of the peoples," and make foreign writers on a trip use exceptionally polite forms of expression. . . .

We must not take old branches for young sprouts, the survivals for the new. Nor must we confuse conformism with membership. I wonder if the real reason for *Return from the U.S.S.R.* does not rest on this question raised by Gide, which is a serious one because it concerns the very existence of the writer:

"I believe," Gide says, "that the worth of a writer is linked to the revolutionary forces which animate him, or more exactly (as I am not foolish enough to recognize artistic worth only in writers of the Left) in his oppositional force. . . ."

The problem is posed with apparent rigor. But Gide, like almost everybody else, means by conformism all the *outer* forms of membership. A true conformist is a man who, in his acts and in his words, conforms to the values of a society with which he disagrees. He is therefore lying. When Descartes declared his conformity with the Catholic religion, there is no doubt he was lying. But you can make no one believe that Sophocles, Racine, and Thomas Aquinas lied. They did not conform: they were members, members of the civilizations of Athens, of the monarchy of Louis XIV, of the Church of Rome.

Gide met conformists and members in the U.S.S.R. Babel, Sholokhov are members. O. . . ., V. . . . are conformists. Membership is an affirmation of the man; the values which he defends are identical with his life. The conformist pretends to defend the present values, though he really prefers those of the past. Here, too, Gide's psychological inquiry was not sufficiently inclusive.

As to Gide's anguish on the worth of art founded on membership, are not Sophocles and Racine enough to reassure André Gide? He fears that there will be applause for "revolutionary banalities." I regret that he did not hear Boris Pasternak read his poems, which are far from easy to grasp, to a group of 1500 workers. We of the West live in a society in which greatness consists of saying *no*. We must finally decide not to attach eternally the destiny of art to misfortune. We must proclaim that there is a greatness which consists of saying *yes*.

THE EXAMPLE of Gide convinces me how difficult it is to say *yes*. Against the stream in bourgeois society, Gide still feels impelled to remain against the stream in Soviet society. The worst of "conformisms" seems to me to be this fashion today, which consists of blushing at not conforming to the non-conformism of the liberal intellectual or the Trotskyist cleric. The unfortunate thing is that this steers one in the direction of the bourgeois stream. The only consistent outcome of the total refusal of membership is silence. Gide speaks.

I understand well that the "permanent revolution" ravishes many of our intellectuals. They are inclined to believe that the true revolutionary is only concerned with ceaselessly surpassing himself, that there is no pause. This idea of the writer is foreign to the builder.

When a Soviet citizen, who does not "conform" to life because he "belongs" to it, shouts "Long live Stalin!" he signifies thereby that he prefers the construction now going on, to the hypothetical constructions; the real revolution to the "permanent revolution." That shout says that the U.S.S.R. has been saved by the opening of the period of the plans, of industrialization and the collectivization of the land. The chatterers had spoken for five years; Stalin was simply the man who set the works going—in spite of them.

I do not believe that Gide has come to a definite conclusion. His reactions seem to me less "Trotskyite" than "liberal." This unprejudiced approach is more prejudiced than one would believe. There is a curious prejudice in the following sentence, perhaps the most disquieting in Gide's book:

"Then I think (in spite of my anti-capitalism) of all those among us, from the great industrialist to the small shopkeeper, who torture their minds and strive forward. . . ."

It was prejudice also, but more candid than perverse, which let pass without noticing it the following sentence, which will henceforth be famous:

"For this remains acquired. There is no longer in the U.S.S.R. the exploitation of the greatest number for the profit of a few. This is enormous."

But who ever asked more as a beginning?

★

# Newsreel

Il Duce—standing before the statue of Cæsar—
Arm thrust sunward over the passing troops,
Casts a bronze shadow.

And the day is late:
Night piles eastward and the hours descend
Heavy with marching thousands; stone
Beating under boots; the squadron planes fill and
Refill the sky, circling round that hand
Even until dark: the spinning roar of doom
Gathering across the stars.

The legions still
Pass: into the matrix of spotlights, out and on—
The edges of earth thunder—and the rigid arm
Blazes with electric glare; the hand fierce, the eyes
Afire on the frowning head: light of power poured
Down on the lashed axes, the swastika, the skulls
Nailed to the fiery crosses.

The night rocks
With tanks that roll into the bowl of light; the sky
Screams.

And Cæsar of old of antique bronze
Black with two thousand years of Roman rain,
Charred with the sun: now in the night bearing
Kilowatt light on the carved toga restored —casts
Before him a restless shadow whose upraised arm
Is belted with power; a helmeted monster
Growing from shade into strident flesh that sends
Sound of its feet through mountains.

So this
Was the dream. This was the dream born, on the cold
Hard smile that now need fear not even the Ides,
As the lips dried to a centered carelessness there
On the Senate floor beneath the muffling robe.

WINFIELD TOWNLEY SCOTT.

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# No Waiting For Lefty

***The spontaneous action of the Windy City cabbies foreshadows a new militancy there***

## By George Robbins

Coast-to-coast, hello America, hello. We're the storm birds of the working class. Workers of the world . . . our bones and blood . . . and when we die they'll know we did it to make a new world. Christ, cut us to little pieces! We'll die for what's right . . . put fruit trees where our ashes are. . . . Well, what's the answer?
Strike!
*Again—*
Strike!
*Louder—*
*Strike! Strike! Strike!*
—ODETS, *Waiting for Lefty.*

IN a lunchroom on the North Side of Chicago one day several weeks ago, two taxicab drivers decided over their coffee and doughnuts that something had to be done about the condition of the city's cabmen. The two hackies, Oscar ("Red") Kofkin and Arthur Cole, had just drawn pay checks from the Yellow Cab Co. that would hardly "feed a boid." Everywhere labor was organizing and bargaining for adequate wages and decent working conditions, so why not the cabbies? Christ, if the five-and-ten girls in Detroit and the young squirt messenger boys in Chicago can organize and win their demands, what's stoppin' us meter guys? Kofkin and Cole began to talk to other cabmen in the Belmont-Clark garage; they jumped into a private car and drove to a half dozen cab depots; they compared pay vouchers with fellow hackies. The response was amazing. There was a spontaneous cry for action, and by nightfall fifty drivers checked their cabs; the number increased to five hundred the following morning, and within twenty-four hours 95 percent of the 5500 hackies employed by Chicago's two major cab companies joined the walkout, swelling the ranks of the spontaneously organized Midwest Taxi Drivers' Union.

The Chicago Yellow Cab Co. is the largest single operating unit in the taxicab industry. Owner of 2166 cabs, it has as one of its major stockholders the Parmelee Transportation Co., controlled by the Checker Cab Manufacturing Co., which, in turn, is under the control of the Cord Corp., makers of the Auburn and Cord automobiles. Just how extensive the chain of control runs is difficult to determine, since the cab companies refuse to open their list of stockholders. One kind of control, though, is pretty clear. Widespread reports point to Chicago's city hall and police headquarters as the axis of the local taxicab industry. Any doubt of such control was exploded several days after the walkout started, when Municipal Court Judge Thomas Green, upon releasing a number of arrested strikers, censured the cab companies for their action in "giving free stock to public officials and police officers."

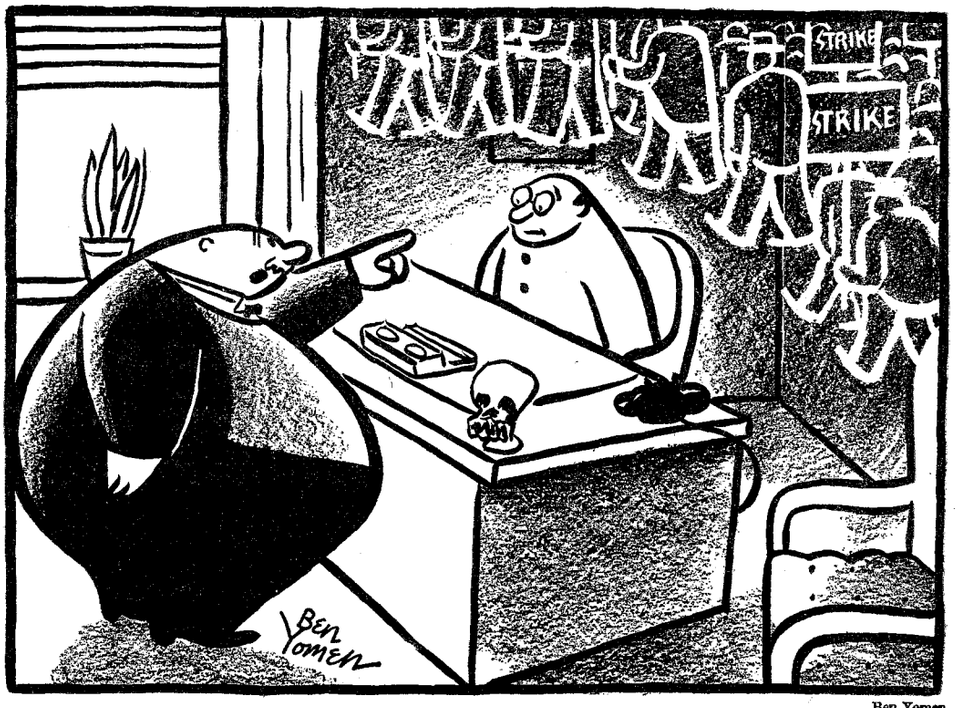
The strike, undeniably the most successful taxi walkout in Chicago's history and the biggest labor upsurge in the state in recent years, took everyone by surprise. It stunned city officials who only a few weeks ago inaugurated, for the stimulation of local business, a "Charter Jubilee" celebration commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of Chicago's birth. It bewildered private motorists, left suddenly to streets emptied of cabs. And it astonished the strikers themselves—they who had come to believe in the maxim, prevalent in taxicab circles, that no two cabmen could agree on any one point—a state of mind engendered by cab officials to divide the drivers' ranks.

Cabbies in Chicago are notoriously underpaid. Yellow Cab drivers, for example, retain only 37½ percent of their receipts, pay for the washing and servicing of their cars, and for one half of the gasoline and oil expenses. Checker cabmen, on the other hand, retain half their receipts, but buy all gasoline and oil. Drivers owning their cabs pay the company for garage facilities and the privilege of using the cab name. Subjected to a rigid demerit system, bullied, spied upon, cabbies have found no solace in their weekly pay checks of nine and ten dollars.

The strikers lost no time in electing committees, throwing picket lines around company garages, and dispatching to cab officials the following demands: collective bargaining with the new union; closed shop; drivers to retain half their receipts; companies to furnish all gasoline and oil, provide repairs; vacations with pay of one week for employees of one to three years' service and two weeks for those employed more than three years; discharge for just cause only, with appeal to arbitration.

THOUGH politically relatively undeveloped, it was not long before the striking hackies learned who were their friends and who their enemies. Among the allies of the cab companies were included:

(1) The Police Department, with Detectives Filetti and Foley of the Vehicle Bureau engaging in repeated assaults on strikers. These two detectives, charged by the hackies with ownership of Yellow Cab stock, seized Kofkin in a restaurant the day after the walkout, alleging that the mug out of which he was drinking beer was intended for use as a deadly weapon. The police raided strike headquarters, stopped private motorists in the search for strikers, and dispersed picket lines. One afternoon while forty cabbies were picketing the Twenty-First Street garage, a pistol shot was fired, and immediately squads of coppers, led by Filetti and Foley, swooped down on the strikers, hurried them in waiting patrols to




Ben Yomen

*"Look, Doctor, here they come again!"*

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SEEING AMERICA FIRST

Herb Kruckman

*IX—Child Labor*

police headquarters where the arrested hackies were looked over by cab company agents.

(2) Thomas B. ("20 percent") Hogan, president of the Yellow Cab Co., who issued repeated statements that only 20 percent of his men had joined the walkout. The day after the start of the strike, Hogan told newspapermen, "The boys are going back to work so fast we'll have most of the cabs in operation." "Sure, he's getting the men," replied strike headquarters, "but they're not Chicago hackies. They're importing finks and sluggers from the East, paying them seven bucks a day and all receipts."

(3) Michael Sokoll, president of the Checker Cab Co., who declared himself "ready to negotiate, but not with outsiders."

(4) Ed Reilly, president of Local 727, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen, & Helpers. "It's an outlaw union and a wildcat strike. If they expect to get anywhere it can only be with the support of the American Federation of Labor." But the strikers reply: "We want the C.I.O., not the A.F. of L. fakers."

The friends of the cabbies, on the other hand, include:

(1) The strong trade unions such as the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the International Typographical Union, United Mine Workers of America, Chicago Fur Workers' Union, and the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union, all contributing liberally to the strike fund. (2) the International Workers' Order, erecting soup kitchens throughout the city. (3) the Illinois Workers' Alliance, assisting in obtaining relief for strikers' families in need. (4) Judge Thomas Green of the Municipal Court, who issued two warrants for the arrest of Filetti and Foley on charges of assaulting strikers. "If the cab companies had paid you instead of giving free stock away you might be earning decent wages," the judge told strikers. (5) the Chicago Repertory Group, foremost labor theater in the state, staging performances of *Waiting for Lefty* for the strike fund benefit. (6) The thirty or more street hack owners, "outlaw," and suburban cabbies, pledging daily contributions to the strike fund. (7) The Cook County Labor Party and the Communist Party, distributing leaflets on the real facts of the strike, and raising funds for the strike.

TIME: *the fourth day of the strike.*

PLACE: *Ashland Auditorium.*

More than 5000 cabbies, wives, and sweethearts jam the historic old hall. Stocky, barrel-chested hackies, guide bands on their arms, indicate a "Standing Room Only" sign.

"I never thought it could be done," said Kofkin looking at the crowd. "I guess we started a little something, all right, all right."

A phalanx of speakers from strike committees parade before the "mike," look at it unfamiliarly. "Listen, boys," says a husky cabbie, addressing the audience. "We're gonna win dis strike and let nobody forget it. I spent fourteen hours in the can last night. For what? For peaceful picketin'. And I tell ya, I'm ready to go back there doin' a better job." The crowd stomps, cheers, whistles. An elderly Jew sitting next to me describes himself as a former cab driver. Leaning over, he says: "This is what we always needed—young blood."

At strike headquarters above a restaurant on Jackson and Halsted Streets, strikers compare their wage checks. One cabbie says he worked seventy-four hours during a seven-day week for eleven bucks. Another explains that he worked from early morning to the midnight shift, clocking nine dollars a day, out of which he got 37½ percent after paying 8½ cents for a gallon of gasoline. Drivers failing to work six days a week were docked five percent. A hackie covering eighty miles a day in eighteen hours at the wheel earned only $1.50 after paying 16 cents for a gallon of gasoline.

"It makes ya see red, I tell ya," says a young striker, "to see by the papers that a yellow scab works two shifts a day at seven bucks a shift. Professional strikebreakers who worked in fruit strikes in Texas now ridin' our cabs and carryin' rods. Well, ya can't blame some of the boys if a couple hacks are toined over."

"Sure," says another cabbie. "The company is bringin' finks from the country. A bunch of lugs who don't even know how to drive to Union Depot."

Wives of the taxicab strikers parade through the loop, carrying signs: "There is nothing yellower than a Yellow Cab scab." They march in twos, heads erect, confident that their men will win.

At this writing, cab officials have proposed that strikers return to work, after which wage negotiations will be opened. But to the cabbies, proud of their new strength in a union, the proposal of "20 percent" Hogan is a plain attempt to pull a fast one.

All Chicago and the Middle West are watching the cabbie strike. The talk says it is the forerunner of an enormous wave of current "sit-down" strikes in the "Charter Jubilee" city. It has led veteran trade unionists to exclaim that Chicago, the sleeping giant of American labor, has at last awakened.

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# The Story of John L. Lewis

***Independent political action by labor is a concept he embraced only recently***

## By Bruce Minton and John Stuart

STORMY abuse from the A.F. of L. executive council greeted the formation of the Committee for Industrial Organization. William Green, president of the Federation, demanded its dissolution. In a dramatic (if precipitate) gesture, John L. Lewis resigned from the council. William Hutcheson, president of the Brotherhood of Carpenters & Joiners, the largest craft union in the A.F. of L., still smarting from the blow Lewis had given him at the previous convention, immediately insisted that the unions affiliated to the C.I.O. be expelled from the Federation. Bespectacled John P. Frey of the metal trades department, who, because of his ability to use large words in an abstruse way, was conceded the title of A.F. of L. theoretician, "prosecuted" the C.I.O. unions with unbounded rancor before the executive council. The remainder of the council vied among themselves in abusing Lewis and the offending unions, led by Matthew Woll and Arthur O. Wharton, president of the International Association of Machinists. "I would rather see the labor movement go under and myself in hell," remarked Wharton, "than have John L. Lewis get away with it." Surpassing them all, William Green fumed that the C.I.O. had "thwarted an organizing campaign in the steel industry."

As the C.I.O. gained headway, the members of the executive council became more frantic. By the fall of 1936, after raising the Red scare, they hastened to suspend those unions directly affiliated to the C.I.O.—about 40 percent of the Federation. For though it lacked any legal power under the A.F. of L. constitution to suspend international and national unions, except by a vote at the annual convention, the executive council dared not wait. It feared that if the C.I.O. unions had a vote in the next convention, the bureaucracy was in danger of defeat and even loss of jobs. After the suspension order, the executive council offered "unity"—on condition that the C.I.O. disband. But for all their pleas for "unity," which their suspension order had shattered, the council members indignantly refused Lewis's proposal that the suspended unions be allowed full participation at the coming Tampa convention in return for a pledge by both factions to abide by a majority decision.

The 1936 Tampa convention, controlled as it was by the craft officials, rubber-stamped the suspension order. The vote of 21,679 to 2043 no more represented the majority opinion of the rank and file than the members of the executive council represented the workers in their respective unions. By not allowing the C.I.O. unions a voice in the convention, the council had ruled out 12,000 adverse votes. Typical was the action of Hutcheson, who cast the carpenters' 3000 votes in favor of suspension, although 70,000 members in Northwest locals supported the C.I.O., and numerous other carpenters' locals had gone on record against suspension. Similarly, a number of the federal unions and central labor bodies with one vote each (completely disproportionate to their large memberships), and many of the smaller unions, dared not oppose the executive council for fear of reprisals. In other cases, reactionary officials disregarded definite instructions by their unions and cast their bloc of votes against the C.I.O. Twenty-two state federations of labor, with two-thirds of the membership in the A.F. of L., protested the suspensions. But that did not deter the executive council. The net effect achieved by the executive council at the Tampa convention was to hamper unity. The executive council openly declared war upon all who sought to achieve progressive and vigorous development for organized labor.

One thing John L. Lewis insisted upon in launching the C.I.O. campaign for industrial unionism: the committee must enlist as many able leaders and organizers as possible. Philip Murray, resourceful vice-president of the United Mine Workers, was appointed chairman of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee. When John Brophy, whom Lewis had formerly expelled from the U.M.W., offered his services to the drive, Lewis accepted and appointed him director of the C.I.O. No one could doubt Brophy's firm integrity, his ability, and his devotion to the labor movement, nor challenge his progressive outlook. With Brophy came other men of the same caliber—Powers Hapgood, Clarence Irwin, the long list of rebels many of whom had fought Lewis's policies years before. "It's a pretty good rule to work with anyone who will work with you," Lewis replied to those who were puzzled over his change from the Red-baiting days.

Lyn David

And by early summer, 1935, organizers invaded, for the first time in over a decade, the small shanty towns along the Monongahela, flocked into Youngstown, Aliquippa, Gary, into the Middle West and South, wherever the furnaces of the great steel trust flamed and smoked to the sky. The steel drive was on. Unless the steel barons recognized the union and bargained collectively with it, John L. Lewis and the C.I.O. threatened to strike the mills. Contracts between the United Mine Workers and the coal operators expired in the spring of 1937. By that time steel would be organized. If the coal operators refused to yield to the union, veteran miners would unite with the aggressive steel workers and the owners of two basic industries would be confronted with a closely knit labor movement, ably directed and financed.

Steel was the key to the mass-production industries—the fortress, till then unconquered, of the open shop. But while steel was the concentration point, the C.I.O. campaign spread to other fronts as well. Rubber workers, supported financially and organizationally by the committee, consolidated their union and made substantial gains in wages and conditions. Their weapon, the sit-down strike, later proved of vital importance to the C.I.O.-backed glass workers, and to the strike that crippled the General Motors Corp. for over a month. Under the leadership of their president, the young ex-minister Homer Martin, in coöperation with Wyndham Mortimer, Richard Frankensteen, and the host of other progressives who headed the United Automobile Union, the workers occupied the auto plants and challenged J. P. Morgan and the du Ponts, overlords, too, of steel. The auto union won exclusive bargaining power in twenty of the corporation's plants; it cracked the anti-labor mass-production industries' front that bulwarked the open-shop. But most important, for the first time in the history of American unionism, a central labor organization supported the strike of an affiliate, and became the determining factor in the struggle. The C.I.O. threw its weight and resources

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behind the automobile workers. Arrayed against the committee and the strikers were William Green and the A.F. of L. executive council who, in their spleen, tried to dismiss the victory as a "surrender." The success of the auto strike gave heart and incentive to the still more ambitious steel campaign. As Lewis declared, "This struggle now in the automobile industry is only the first engagement between labor and finance." He added, in his vibrant, dramatic way, "Mr. Morgan and Mr. du Pont might as well know that collective bargaining is coming soon in their own steel industry."

Come it did, in less than a month after the automobile workers ended their sit-down. The steady advance of steel organization, the success of the West Coast maritime strike, and the victory of the United Automobile Workers, convinced the steel trust that the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, & Tin Workers, backed by the C.I.O., had the economic strength to force recognition and collective bargaining. By February, 1937, 200,000 steel workers had flocked into the Amalgamated Association, and every week brought thousands of new recruits. The company unions, originally set up by the corporations to block real unionism, either had gone over *en masse* to the Amalgamated Association, or had indicated their intention of following C.I.O. leadership. Nor had the half-million dollars in advertising distributed to 375 newspapers by the American Iron and Steel Institute, composed of corporations pledged to combat organized labor, turned the trick for the trust. The average newspaper reader had little sympathy for the steel owners who, in the preceding year, had amassed fantastic profits and yet wailed that collective bargaining would raise wages and so decrease the size of extra dividends.

The significance of the steel trusts' capitulation could hardly be exaggerated. After fifty years, organized labor had finally gained recognition from the most bitter and most powerful combination of anti-union corporations in America. The sacrifices of Homestead, the experiences gained from the 1919 steel strike led by William Z. Foster (who more than any other man had carried on the struggle for industrial organization) were at last productive. Recognition of the Amalgamated Association was the turning point in labor's ceaseless war, the Antietam that preceded emancipation. When General Motors and United States Steel were forced to yield, the other mass-production corporations retreated: for example, the General Electric Co. agreed to discuss collective bargaining. And strikes to organize the Chrysler company and Bethlehem Steel were launched with confidence in their outcome.

Not that the war was won. The policies of William Green and the A.F. of L. executive council dovetailed more closely than ever with those of big business, deepening the split in labor's ranks by ordering C.I.O. unions excluded from central trades and labor bodies, and from state federations. John P. Frey rushed to the aid of the company unions set up by the United States Steel, in the hope of thwarting the C.I.O. The moribund metal-trades department of the A.F. of L. announced plans to "organize" the steel fabricating plants —to block further success in bringing these workers into industrial organizations. The executive council attempted to prevent the C.I.O.'s progress in the textile and shoe trades.

Moreover, the recent C.I.O. gains had yet to be consolidated. The majority of workers still remained outside the unions. But the C.I.O., with its ability to penetrate the company unions, with its insistence on unity between Negro and white, foreign-born and native workers, with its purposeful leadership and tactic of throwing its entire strength behind *organizational campaigns and strikes*, gave new courage and strength to all wage and salary workers whom the executive council of the A.F. of L. had refused to draw into the labor movement. And to those unions and labor bodies that the council expelled, the C.I.O. offered affiliation and support so that these groups would not stand alone.

The C.I.O. was a powerful force for progress. But the open-shop corporations had by no means exhausted their resources: espionage, intimidation, reactionary legislation, injunctions, Red-baiting, vigilante terror, were still at their disposal. The leaders of the C.I.O. did not have to be clairvoyant to predict that the monopoly interest would utilize every ruse to invalidate the C.I.O.'s first success and to prevent future gains. Yet labor had tasted power; above all, workers had seen what unity of action and unity of organization could accomplish. The C.I.O. was pledged to consolidate the advance in steel and motors. It planned drives into textile, oil, shoe, and other mass-production industries. With labor organized, workers would be equipped to resist reaction. The C.I.O. liberated new strength in America, and gave direction to the militancy of the working class. The impulse given by the C.I.O. promised to be of great importance in the fashioning of a political instrument which could turn back the growing danger of fascism and assure greater security, a higher standard of living, the preservation and extension of civil rights, the increased freedom of the masses, whether industrial or agricultural workers, professional or white-collar employees. The C.I.O. was changing the face of America.

John L. Lewis, no longer a young man, still found as great a joy in a fight as he had in the old Lucas days. The new drive, however, implied a fresh perspective foreign to the Gompers tradition. Painstakingly deliberate when it came to reorienting his approach, Lewis clung to many of his old ideas, grudgingly discarding them only after he was positive they had become a dead weight. Nevertheless, objective forces exercised increasing pressure. The U. S. Supreme Court decisions declaring the N.R.A. and the Guffey bill unconstitutional momentarily staggered Lewis, then led him to revise his conception of labor's role in politics. Economic strength, he began

*"Frisby's gone humanitarian again—he wants to use laughing gas on his strikers."*

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to concede, was not enough. To preserve what labor won through its economic power, he found it imperative to invade the political field. The financial and industrial barons still controlled the political machine and, through it and the courts, they violated labor's rights, nullified progressive legislation, bound the labor movement at every turn. Only if labor could exert political influence could it expect more than transitory gains.

Lewis was not yet ready for the full step of independent political action. With hesitation he helped form Labor's Non-Partisan League to resist the toryism of the Republican Party and the Liberty League in the 1936 national presidential campaign. The Non-Partisan League placed its confidence in Franklin D. Roosevelt. Lewis made clear that the League did not support the Democratic Party, but only the candidate. Of himself he stated, "I am not a Republican, I am not a Democrat"—a step forward from his former allegiance to the two-party system. But he went on hurriedly, "I am not a Fascist, a Communist, nor a Socialist."

The disastrous defeat of the Republican Party revealed the antipathy in America to open reaction. Lewis wisely agreed with other leaders not to disband Labor's Non-Partisan League after the election. On the other hand, the League at first remained passive, and Lewis postponed committing himself once and for all to independent political action. Instead of pressing forward, the Non-Partisan League showed an initial inclination to mark time. Instead of expanding itself into a Farmer-Labor Party on a broad platform that would win the confidence of workers, farmers, and their allies among the middle classes, instead of preparing for the future when it would be imperative to fight on the political front, the leaders of the Non-Partisan League, Lewis among them, delayed and so for a period endangered the League's effectiveness.

But when President Roosevelt proposed to reform the Supreme Court, the Non-Partisan League exerted its full power in support of the plan. And with this willingness to take sides on the political front came a new resolution to carry the battle for progressive legislation into all states, to mold the Non-Partisan League into a decisive political instrument. In a Declaration of Purpose, the League stated: "This organization will be used, in election campaigns of the future, to insure the nomination and election to public office of men and women who are not only pledged to support labor and other progressive measures, but whose record also justifies the belief that these pledges will be kept." And further, "We will work with every progressive group whose purpose is to secure the enactment of liberal and humanitarian legislation."

The League thus repudiated the non-political premise of the A.F. of L. Lewis, in his own name, strongly advocated a legislative program, though the C.I.O. officially made no demands. Lewis called for an amendment to the federal constitution that would limit the jurisdiction of the federal courts, and vigorously backed President Roosevelt's plan to reform the federal courts. For the rest, except for his support of the new Guffey bill, and the child-labor amendment, Lewis's legislative program remained somewhat hazy, indicating that Lewis himself was not yet certain what steps Congress should take to prevent the mounting exploitation of workers.

Yet Lewis's limited political outlook did not prevent the rumor from spreading that he wanted the presidency in 1940. Whatever political ambitions he harbored, Lewis did not let them blind him to the first task of organization. He saw plainly that his future as a labor leader or as a political figure was linked to the success or failure of the C.I.O.. He replied to questions concerning his presidential hopes:

> I have tried to avoid any public discussion of the idea of the presidency. I am not seeking public office. I have turned down public office. I could have been Secretary of Labor years ago.
>
> When the workers are organized, there will be by-products of that organization. But this is not the time to discuss them. What they will be will be up to the workers, after they have organized.

In certain respects, the C.I.O. reflected the traditional attitudes of the A.F. of L. from which Lewis had not yet completely broken. The Committee to some degree lacked the full and vital union democracy necessary for a powerful and successful labor movement. To inspire continued confidence, the C.I.O. must be made to express more fully the desires of the rank and file. Members of the Committee, other than Lewis, tended before the A.F. of L. Tampa convention to vacillate when confronted by opposition from the executive council. Moreover, while the C.I.O. strongly opposed dual unionism, it concentrated its organizational campaigns in the mass-production industries and avoided as yet challenging the bankrupt A.F. of L. officialdom in the craft unions. So long as the craft unions continued to abide by the rules of Gompersism, the split in organized labor engineered by the executive council menaced the whole union structure. In addition, the Committee had no broad, well-defined legislative program. It was inclined to gloss over the fight against war and fascism. It lacked a clear-cut, class-struggle policy clarifying its objectives and leading toward independent political action through the formation of a farmer-labor party.

Repeatedly, critics of the C.I.O. have pointed to Lewis's past record of failure in the United Mine Workers, and have questioned his sincerity in heading the C.I.O. They have expressed fears that he will betray the campaign for industrial organization before the labor movement achieves its goal. The picture of the C.I.O. as a one-man organization distorts reality. Lewis is not the C.I.O., though he was the central figure in its formation. He helped create an organization which, because of its progressive character and because the need for it was great, drew into it a host of militant and able labor leaders. As the C.I.O. awakens and coördinates the working class, Lewis must either keep pace (as he has done so brilliantly up to now), or give way to more far-sighted men who will not be deterred even should Lewis suddenly cry "halt." On the other hand, Lewis can certainly prove equal to the task of providing correct and forceful leadership. He has done so in the past two years. It is significant that since the formation of the C.I.O., John L. Lewis has indicated an astounding capacity for growth and development. He has pointed out that "there are forces at work in this country that would wipe out, if they could, the labor movement of America, just as it was wiped out in Germany or just as it was wiped out in Italy." Fascism and organized labor cannot exist side by side; a strong union movement is the most powerful offense against fascism.

"I would like to make a contribution to the preservation of democracy," Lewis remarked. When in 1933 John L. Lewis was faced with failure and defeat, he struck out with undiminished energy in a new direction, discarding principles he had long accepted as axiomatic. "I don't give a hang what happened yesterday," he told an interviewer. "I live for today and tomorrow. I will say only this: it takes every man some time to find himself in this world, to decide what he wants to do with his life. It took me longer than most people."

*(This is the end of the series on Mr. Lewis.)*

## Sonnet for Dave on His 23rd Birthday

Clear eyes, a firm slant to your jaw, no job;
A father weary, mother growing old,
Their first gray hairs, their slow retreat from bold
Fine faith in their America, who sob
Not but are tired; kid brother sheltered still
By high school walls, kid sister schools at night
And frets all day, grandmother losing sight
Of this life; comfortable house, the bill
Paid in the prosperous years; most of your friends
Comrades in unemployment, while the rest
Stumble along blind alleys; and Ann, lest
We forget, the girl you cannot marry.
All these you have; I add no wish; we fight
With millions to make future birthdays bright.

ALBERT MORTON.

★ ★ ★

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# NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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## The Ghost of Gompers

WILLIAM GREEN has a faculty for keeping his ear to the ground. On the same day that the Law Department of the National Association of Manufacturers declared the sit-down strike "clearly unlawful," the president of the American Federation of Labor warned labor against "this illegal procedure." To clinch the point, Green added: "Both personally and officially I disavow the sit-down strike as a part of the economic and organization policy of the American Federation of Labor."

William Green's attack on the sit-down was not unexpected. When two months ago the success of the C.I.O.'s campaign to organize the mass-production industries and to bring the unskilled and semi-skilled workers into the labor movement became apparent, the A.F. of L. executive council impressed on Green the urgency of using any method to stop the industrial unionists. Neither suspension of the unions affiliated to John L. Lewis's C.I.O. nor attempts to bolster the General Motors Corp.'s original refusal to bargain collectively with the United Automobile Workers turned the trick.

The subsequent frenzied order to state federations and central labor bodies to expel C.I.O. affiliates were for the most part ignored. And the executive council's threat to invade the mass-production industries and to organize them into craft units, though it encouraged the company unions of the Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corp., was no more convincing than its usual empty promises to organize which had consistently ended in failure.

The latest resort of the executive council is to cry that the sit-down is "illegal." For just as the swollen profits of the great corporations are at stake, so are the jobs of William Green and the other diehards. To them, the issue is not the health and progress of the labor movement. They realize only that the C.I.O. is organizing the workers, and that the sit-down strike is a weapon designed to protect the property interests of the workers in their jobs. Green—and through him spoke the old guard of the A.F. of L. executive council—had his choice in 1935 either to join Lewis or to cling to the outworn, bankrupt craft forms that had over a forty-year period failed to unionize the overwhelming majority of workers in America. Green bet on the wrong horse; rather than see his rival win, he attempted to bribe the jockey, to dope the other horse, even to poison it.

Gompersism, based on collaboration between the A.F. of L. officialdom that brought capitulation in its wake, reached its ultimate degradation in Green's attack on the sit-down strike.

Condemnation was the final admission of defeat, the last desperate attempt to prevent labor from building strong, realistic unions. The ghost of Gompers once more pulled the strings, and the puppet Green responded.

Impotent, fumbling, William Green screamed frantically, and the employers were comforted. But the central labor bodies had already answered his attempts to split the labor movement. They had watched the C.I.O., had seen what it had accomplished in its campaign to organize labor on an industrial basis and by its vigorous new methods designed to meet the challenge of the highly organized corporations.

Unity in the labor movement rests in the rank and file. This alone can answer the ghost of Gompers.

## What the Court Battle Shows

BOURBONS have a way of indicting themselves with an almost perverse carelessness. A glance at almost any issue of the *Congressional Record* will furnish proof of this Marie Antoinette phenomenon. Take the case of Representative Gifford of Massachusetts. Denouncing the President and his court reform program a few days ago, Mr Gifford unburdened himself of this:

> So he resorted to another argument at the "victory dinner," stating that the dust bowl is blowing now, that one third of our people are ill fed and ill housed now, and similar platitudes. The audience applauded hilariously under the spell of that beautiful voice. But when we come to our senses, how ridiculous it seems to us! It always has been, and in the future it will be that perhaps one third of the people will be relatively ill-fed and ill-housed, in spite of all their government can do for them.

One-third of the people of a great nation ill fed and ill housed! Mr. Gifford not only admits it; he doesn't see how anyone can deny it. To him it is a "platitude." What is far worse, Mr. Gifford is fully prepared to see fifty million Americans ill fed and ill housed now and for all time to come.

Let anything threaten that arrangement, in fact—something like a powerful labor movement—and those for whom Mr. Gifford and his friends speak are quick to hint of a change in the state that will stamp out such a threat. Aroused by the sit-down strikes, Representative Dies of Texas warns threateningly that if man "cannot secure the enjoyment of his property rights or the fruits of his labor and earnings under a democracy, he will attempt to do so under a dictatorship."

In other words, say Messrs. Gifford and Dies, if one third of the nation is cold and hungry, that is the way things must be. The government cannot help it But let labor attempt to take matters into its own hands with the idea of helping itself, and these same men at once whip out the threat of fascism.

This is plain speaking It is the kind of speaking that is evoked only when reactionaries face a loss of some measure of their power. That the President's court program can drive the tories to such a brazen admission of their true position is the surest proof of its immediate social importance. By the enraged squeals of the Dieses and the Giffords, Americans may know that there is only one course for progressives in the battle over the Court. A victory for the plan will be an immediate gain for democracy. A defeat would be a triumph for the most fascist-minded men in America.

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# READERS' FORUM

*Two letters on matters concerning Trotsky—And two on chambers of horrors*

● A great deal has been said and written with respect to the Moscow trials, in which the defendants, charged with espionage and sabotage, pleaded guilty and made long, detailed, and circumstantial confessions of the crime with which they were charged. Nevertheless, a hue and cry has been raised on the ground that such convictions (namely, based merely on confessions in court) are essentially undemocratic and foreign to Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence and could only have been obtained under a dictatorship.

In this connection, I wish to call attention to the case of John S. Farnsworth, a former naval officer. On February 26 he was sentenced by Federal Justice James M. Proctor to from four to twelve years for peace-time espionage based on a charge of selling secrets to the Japanese government, to which charge he pleaded guilty. Farnsworth came into court and pleaded guilty to the charge, but gave no facts whatever to substantiate his plea, and made no factual confession. Yet, it is interesting, in view of the outcry over the Moscow trials, that I have heard no charge that there was anything untoward or sinister in the fact of his conviction under such circumstances.

The truth of the matter is that the conduct of the Moscow trials was perfectly in consonance with Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence, under which a confession in open court is all that is required in cases of treason, and in fact is all that is required in practically all crimes, with the exception of murder. And in regard to those crimes where corroboration is required, no corroboration whatever is required of the defendant's connection with the crime, but only corroboration of the fact that such a crime was in fact committed.

It seems clear from the foregoing that if the Moscow trials are to be condemned as unjust and undemocratic, in all fairness so must the Farnsworth trial. However, as a lawyer, it is evident to me that the charge is utterly unfounded in both cases, as it is in keeping both with the theory and practice of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence.

I trust that the publication of these facts will help to clear up a misconception which seems to be very prevalent today. VERA BOUDIN.

## *A Letter to the Trotsky Committee*

● In the name of the splendid men and women who composed and were part of the old Socialist Party, who answered the bugle call of Eugene V. Debs, Charles Edward Russell, and others, I protest and repudiate this American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky.

The actions of Trotsky and his followers call not for their defense, but for their denunciation as the enemies of socialism.

I joined the Socialist Party in 1909. During the war I was a delegate to the New York City Committee and an organizer of the third, fifth, and tenth wards of the Socialist Party. I am filled with the utmost indignation to see the glorious traditions of the great Debs perverted and destroyed by a group who have earned the contempt and hatred of every honest and progressive person in the world.

Whatever doubts I may have had concerning the guilt of Trotsky and his followers in the first trial has been completely dispelled by the shocking revelations of the second trial.

You have sent me literature asking for my support. In the face of the confessions and evidence and opinions of impartial observers, what, may one ask, is the reason for the continuance of your committee?

Leon Trotsky stands condemned before the world. He should be left to his conscience and his memories as a punishment.

I am making this public so it may be known that those who support socialism cannot support your committee and Leon Trotsky.

DOROTHY BROPHY.

## *A Nazi Chamber of Horrors*

● It strikes me as very strange that in all the discussion occasioned by Mayor LaGuardia's remark that there should be a "chamber of horrors" at the coming World's Fair and International Exposition in New York in 1939, nobody has mentioned the real chamber of horrors, maintained and exhibited by the Nazis in Berlin.

I refer to the Erster Berliner Revolutions-Museum der Sturm-Abteilung. This is located at the corner of Friedrichstrasse and Französischestrasse, not far from Unter den Linden.

It is intended to be a place where all Germans who may feel like opposing Hitler and Goering and the other butchers will learn what happened to others, Social-Democrats and Communists and Catholics, who thought they could defend their country against the gangsters financed by Herr Thyssen, the Ruhr ironmaster. Exhibits are set up on the old Chinese principle that "one picture is worth ten thousand words," and the eye can take in more horrors than even the world-famous chamber of horrors (admission, sixpence) at Madame Tussaud's in London can afford to the morbid. There are the shirts with dried blood which used to adorn the backs of village priests and journalists. Everything is explained with the meticulous brutality of a Nazi or Junker, and the effect upon a civilized person, after seeing a few of the less revolting items, is not to praise bloody Adolf as the saviour of Germany from the "scourge of Communism." Decent tourists who visit this spot say prayers of thanksgiving that there are brave men and women like the Communists to stamp out the Nazi vileness. As an English visitor said to me, the Nazi museum is the most eloquent argument for Marxism that could have been made. MARION VALENTINE.

## *Suggestion to Mayor LaGuardia*

● A few days ago, Mr. LaGuardia suggested to the country at large that a "Hitler chamber of horrors" be included in the next World's Fair to be held in New York.

It certainly is not my place to justify the rage emanating from the land of the swastika through its blood-sucking mouth, der Fuehrer, but it does seem to me that our mayor's suggestion is possibly just a little premature, and perhaps slightly unnecessary.

I think that Mayor LaGuardia should fall in line with the old travel slogan: "See America first." Why not a view of the horrors in this country?

Inasmuch as Billy Rose has deposited five thousand dollars as a deposit for the five acre space he plans to depict the Hitler horrors on, why not have local legislation go him one better and reserve a larger area?

I hold no claim toward being an artist or having any eye for design. However, it takes no such sense of perspective to imagine a set of wax figures portraying the starvation diet afforded by many of our southern plantation owners to their "lowly" sharecroppers, as exhibit number one. A few lynchings might add to the general scene, with the mobs of twentieth-century barbarians madly watching "justice" triumph. Then a picturization of a few labor union terrorists in action among the miners, steel workers, etc., and, as a final treat, one of the unpublicized hospitals containing many of our World War veterans. Wax images of men lying on their backs since the war, some of them still unaware that the guns have ceased. Others, less unfortunate, who can neither sit, nor stand, nor lie down, but must remain suspended; human balloons.

Add these all together and you have as fine an exhibit of horror as any country could produce. Why patronize foreign horror when one can so easily "buy American?" ALLAN BERNE.

Ruth Gikow

## *Cartoonists, Attention*

● Let me suggest, by way of example, that some of your cartoonists take a turn at the rifle range and observe how a man shoots a rifle. Ignorance or neglect of the facts of subject matter they interpret renders their work unconvincing.

The radical press preaches that the materials and technique of a cartoon should be secondary to its intent; that art should be a weapon, a means to an end. This conviction is fully justified, but the publication of arty-art cartoons, evidently under the misapprehension that extreme (i. e., "modern") techniques are in themselves revolutionary, denies this conviction. For the purposes of radical publications, above all others, drawings and cartoons should be lucid, divested of arty and technical hokum; and in a broad human sense should be clearly and immediately understandable.

MAYNARD DIXON.

## *Censoring Spanish Newsreels*

● The New Theatre of Philadelphia booked the film, *A Madrid Document,* for its Spanish programs Friday and Saturday evening, March 12 and 13. Friday night, a representative of the Board of Censors came to the theater and asked about this film. He was told that it was a newsreel from Madrid. The showing was delayed until the arrival of two other members of his committee, whom he called. They decided to see the film with the audience. After they had seen it, they told the members of the theater that it could not be called a newsreel, because it was three reels long, and appeals for funds, and such a film is not permitted. They promised to let the theater hear from them within a few days, after they had considered the question.

Saturday night, one of the men returned, accompanied by a constable with two warrants. They confiscated the film, threatening to destroy it, and arrested the theater secretary and the operator of the film, who had been able to show them his state license the night before.

The audience was outraged and indignant. An anti-censorship committee was immediately organized, everyone present promising to take an active part on this issue. A group was formed to gather friends to visit Mayor Wilson in a body. Telegrams were sent immediately to Governor Earle, protesting this violation of civil liberties. Petitions were drawn up and distributed throughout the city.

The immediate issue is to obtain the release of *A Madrid Document.* This newsreel was not under a state ban, and its seizure was unjust and unwarranted. The committee will also make a drive to lift the ban Governor Earle has put on *Spain in Flames.* NEW THEATRE, PHILA.

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# REVIEW AND COMMENT

***Bill Foster's life story—Is war near or far?—English Novelists and English noblemen***

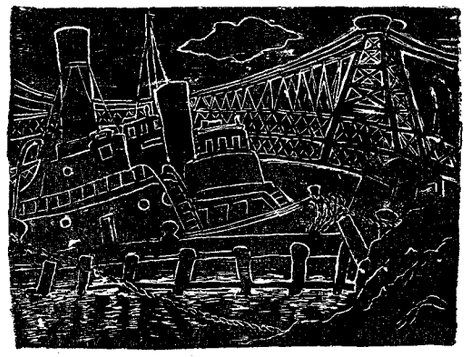
WM. Z. FOSTER'S autobiography* is the life story, broad, factual, and impersonal, of an American worker and the forces which led him to revolutionary conclusions and finally to the Communist Party, of which he is now national chairman. Born of Irish immigrant parents in Taunton, Mass., where the red flag first flew in 1776, Foster was denied education and became a worker at ten. He deeply resented poverty. His mother, who had been a weaver, was crushed by excessive childbearing. At fourteen he was beaten in a strike. Early the iron of the class struggle entered his heart. He sought a way out, and the growth of his keen mind began. Eagerly he followed the American Railroad Union strike led by Debs in 1894, and the march of Coxey's unemployed army. At nineteen, as a union man on the Third Ave. street-car line in New York City, he had his first struggle with a union bureaucrat, who discharged him and smashed the union. From then on he carried a union card.

In 1901, after hearing an unknown street speaker, he joined the Socialist Party. Foster says: "His proposal for the workers to take over the government and the industries and to abolish the profit system appealed to me as the only real solution of the workers' problems, and my thirty-five years of later experience in life have only confirmed this first opinion." It was the turning point of his life. At twenty his revolutionary spirit was born.

Twenty-six years of actual working experience followed—at chemicals, lumber, metal-mining, meat-packing, agriculture, marine transportation, building, etc. As a deep-water sailor he covered fifty thousand miles in three years, and suffered "the rawest and most callous exploitation." He heeded the siren song of the West, made seven cross-country hobo trips, became a typical western floating worker, then homesteaded in Oregon. A wealth of hard-won knowledge gives Bill Foster his simplicity and strength, his ready accessibility to all workers, his capacity to encourage and enlighten them.

In the West, as a protest against the middle-class reformists who dominated the Socialist Party, his left-wing activities began. He joined the I.W.W. in jail during the Spokane free speech fight of 1910. His probing mind sent him to Europe in 1911 to study French and German syndicalism. As I.W.W. delegate to the Budapest International Trade Union Congress, he challenged the right of Vice-President Duncan of the A.F. of L. to represent American labor.

Abroad, he discovered the method of "boring from within" with which his name is particularly identified. This new tactic he proposed to the I.W.W. on his return. But



Sid Goteliffe

the Wobblies were then at the crest of their power and scorned his advice. Foster is eminently fair to individuals and groups. He gives excellent estimates of Debs, De Leon, Haywood. He credits the I.W.W. for its fighting courage, leadership in spontaneous strikes, revolutionary ardor, anti-war stand. He analyzes the conditions that made it anti-political: disfranchisement of floaters and foreigners, political corruption. From the vantage point of experience, I believe the I.W.W. should have accepted his proposal to give up dual unionism in well-organized trades, and go to work inside the old unions instead. If we had heeded Foster then, we could have concentrated on the gigantic task of organizing the unskilled migratory and immigrant workers, rejected as "unorganizable" by the A.F. of L. The C.I.O. might thus have developed much sooner, and the I.W.W. have been the core of a real industrial organization.

Foster went ahead resolutely to demonstrate his idea. His liveliest chapters are "The Meat-Packing Campaign" (of 1917) and "The Steel Campaign" (of 1919). He modestly lists them as A.F. of L. enterprises, but it was he who made them possible. He matched wits with Gompers, and maneuvered that unwilling old fox to endorse his plan. "I felt as if I had been swimming in a sewer," is his comment. Compelled by lack of support to modify his first brilliant plans, he displayed great strategic skill with the material available. Sabotaged and deserted by the A.F. of L. hierarchy, he wrested a victory for 200,000 stockyard workers from a war-time arbitration board, and proved that the steel workers would organize and fight. He was the ablest labor organizer this country had produced. One speculates on what he could have done, with the resources now at the command of the C.I.O., if illness had not prevented it.

The climax of the book is Foster's trip to Russia in 1921 and his ready acceptance and sympathetic understanding of the Soviet Republic, which he hailed as "a trail blazer for the exploited millions of the earth."

The book ends with a prophecy, to the fulfillment of which he has given his devoted life: "The masses, under the leadership of the Communist Party, will wipe out forever this monstrous capitalist system, with its poverty and brutality, and establish a free, prosperous, and happy Soviet America." More power to you, Bill Foster, and all others like you!

ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN.

* FROM BRYAN TO STALIN, *by William Z. Foster. International Publishers.* $2.50.

### *Watch Closely . . .*

THE ANTIGUA STAMP, *by Robert Graves. Random House.* $2.50.

ROBERT GRAVES, in deciding to abandon ancient history for modern times, has not quite succeeded in bringing his novel up to the present. To be sure, it does not recede as far into the past as the Claudius books; it dates back (a mere fifteen years) to all those snobbishly witty extravaganzas of the Peter Whiffle school. Like them, this book is built around a carefully frivolous subject as though to say, I am really far too civilized to take things seriously; life is a joke; but observe how profound, how incisive and true are the little asides, the deliberately offhand remarks I strew so effortlessly around me.

The stamp-collecting on which the story is so elegantly draped does not make its appearance at sufficient length to be a burden; it serves the same function as those specialties like Egyptology or chess with which detective stories strive to prove they can be highbrow, and indeed the book is very much like one of those dexterous examples of literary futility. Mr. Graves's main preoccupations are the feud between a brother and sister over the world's rarest stamp, and the opportunities for satiric comment which their quarrels, their occupations (she is an actress, he a wishful novelist), and their lawsuits, afford. He is amusing in the court scenes; it is so easy to poke fun at elaborately technical formalities, and he does manage to provoke a rousing series of climaxes in his dealings with the intricate depths of property relations in law. He also enjoys gibing at the intelligence of theater audiences, taking side-swipes at psychoanalysis in Jane's creation of a company of actor-robots whom she supplies with complete personalities, offstage and on. All the foolery is built up into rococo scenes of practical jokes and huge fantasy, like the stamp auction attended by European royalty, Chinese war lords, and Indian potentates.

But Mr. Graves takes most pleasure in the loving malice with which he describes the characters of Jane and Oliver, both singularly disagreeable, and the complete lack of decency in the human race, as he observes it. Of course he is quite self-consciously aware of what he is doing, and takes time out to tell the reader: now here is a minor character who acts in a fairly pleasant fashion, but notice

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that there is no story involved in this, that the only interesting situations arise out of revenge, stupidity, vanity, cruelty. The aside is typical, for the merit of the book, such as it is, lies in its technical virtuosity, the ease with which Mr. Graves tosses colored balls in the air with a brilliant running patter and an ingratiatingly intimate explanation of just how the trick is done. I am writing a novel, he says, I toss up a fountain of words, now watch carefully, see the pattern form, see it disappear. And a very clever vaudeville performance it is. The fact that the performance comes from a writer of Mr. Graves's talent and is imbued with such savage hatred, makes the whole thing rather nauseating. One cannot help feeling that if he had not said Good-bye to All That, but had said Hello instead, he would not find it so necessary to write trickery when he deals with the tragic and surging present, much less to insist (with the maddeningly pitying smile), that this stuff, compounded of pettiness and spite, *is* life.

MARJORIE BRACE.

### *Elizabeth's Essex*

ROBERT DEVEREUX, EARL OF ESSEX, *by G. B. Harrison. Henry Holt & Co.* $3.

THERE is a literary quality to the life of Essex which naturally attracts the biographer. The great Elizabethans—those "exterior visions" as Lytton Strachey called them—with their exquisite sensibilities, their coarseness, their poisons, poetry, filth, their bewildering mixture of the lofty and the low, move through the imagination like a mysterious and contradictory pageant. Behind the pageant, to be sure, are other scenes, rather less literary. In darkness and dirt, the seeds of the bourgeois state and the seeds of imperialism stir and wriggle, and though darkness and dirt are fruitful and exciting to the historian, some writers prefer to look elsewhere.

Mr. Harrison is such a writer. He believes that an ordered and mellow accumulation of fact is about enough, and from his pages emerge only familiar impressions of politics and society. Essex combined beauty with a certain wayward brilliance, an intermittent melancholy, a marvelous literary style. Impossible for the queen, aging but still a connoisseur, to resist bestowing upon him both the sweet-wines monopoly and a seat on the Privy Council. The council, alas, governing England without benefit of party politics, plotted industriously against itself; and in that narrow court world, where intimate household affairs jostled familiarly with intricate diplomacy and high finance, a plot was something to be feared. It might catch up with you anywhere—in bed, on board ship, at a game of tennis, anywhere at all—bringing disgrace and possibly death. Essex, no plotter, lived in a state of arrogant apprehension, and with reason; for in his fall, when it came, there was a mingling of psychology, politics, and economics as elaborate as an Elizabethan conceit or as one of his own letters.

Mr. Harrison does not answer those questions which any reader today has a right to ask of him. What was the revolution in English history and character which set these Elizabethan notables, so credible and yet so unintelligible, moving, like crabs, sideways across their own times and one another's paths? Why was it the Cecils, and not the queen, who ruined Essex with such lingering precision? You would gather from Mr. Harrison's pages the notion that the large and inevitable designs of history shape themselves through a series of accidents: if Essex had been a better soldier, if he had taken the advice of Bacon, or not known Bacon, or not gone to Ireland. . . . The accidents are beyond analysis, but the design is clear, though Mr. Harrison does not formulate it. England was turning into a modern state, and Essex was like an outsider who knows a little too much about a secret transaction, but not enough.

He was, indeed, a symbol of feudal England, just as the Cecils were a symbol of mercantilist England. Symbols are magnetic, and their chief interest lies in the fragments which fly to them. Around Essex in his last days there gathered, not only the hotheads and ne'er-do-wells, but a group of radical puritans whose visions, though dim and imperfect, looked forward to the great revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. So the age of chivalry and the age of industry for a moment met and touched—in Essex House, in the sixteenth century, in an atmosphere of treason. Mr. Harrison's book is always readable and often dramatic: but its main importance lies in the things which it does not say and which the reader must guess for himself. GEORGE DANGERFIELD.

### *Divergent Views*

VIEWED WITHOUT ALARM: EUROPE TODAY, *by Walter Millis. Houghton Mifflin Co.* $2.50.

ZERO HOUR, *by Richard Freund. Oxford University Press.* $1.25.

THE chief aim of Mr. Millis's little book of European impressions is to soothe the nerves of Americans who have fallen victim to the propaganda of war mongers. Enough of sword rattling. Let there be peace and amity! When Mr. Millis left the United

*"Who's sponsoring it?"* John Mackey

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States, it was with some faint doubt as to whether he might not be engulfed in a world war before he returned. When he came back, however, "it was with a sense that such fears could be exaggerated." He realizes, of course, that the "dictators, the diplomatics, and the wars are real enough, but one sees them on the ground through certain homelier perspectives that, also, may not be without their importance." His reasons for such optimism are simple enough. He believes that the British "have decided simply that they will not fight." Moreover, Great Britain is an unknown quantity as far as the next world war is concerned, and a war "can hardly be planned satisfactorily without knowing what the British army, the British air force, and the British fleet will do." And Mr. Millis believes that "nobody—least of all the British—knows what they will do." What about France? The French cannot fight; "the Germans are not ready even if they actually wished to risk" a war; "the Russians have no reason to start a war." And Mussolini? Mr. Millis was not in Rome, but he thinks that "Mussolini's assurances that Ethiopia is enough for him for the present" may be taken at their face value.

Is it possible that Mr. Millis believes his own words? Is it possible that he is ignorant of the most elementary facts of the Italo-German war against the Spanish Republic? What about the scores of thousands of Italians on the Guadalajara front? What about the German planes that bomb the civilian populations of Madrid and Valencia? It is true that the Russians have no reason to start a war. But is it equally true that Germany, in the face of Hitler's own statements, has no designs on Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Ukraine? Of course, as long as Great Britain is aware that Mussolini aims to extend his naval influence to the Balearic Islands and Spanish Morocco, she will remain "neutral," in order not to alienate France. But it is the very "neutrality" of Great Britain that lends courage to the Nazis' acts of aggression, just as her "non-intervention" commission plays into the hands of Franco and his fascist allies. If Hitler were certain that England disapproved his tactics, he would soon curb his expansionist appetite which, regardless of whether he is ready or not, will plunge the world into another war. But England does not disapprove. Moreover, it is common knowledge that Great Britain is ready to strike a bargain with Hitler at the expense of eastern and southeastern Europe, and that she is ready to betray Czechoslovakia just as she has betrayed Spain.

All these are elementary and well-known facts. They have been emphasized time and again by history itself and by competent students of international affairs. They are reiterated once more by Richard Freund in *Zero Hour*.

*Zero Hour*, unlike *Viewed Without Alarm*, is a competent and lucid study of the war forces that are now operating in Europe. Many of Mr. Freund's generalizations, to be sure, are open to question. He, too, lacks that social vision which gives one a clearer perception of world events. He is, however, an excellent journalist. He has a thorough understanding of the aims and diplomatic games played by Germany, Italy, and Japan—the "three obvious centers of unrest"—and records his views faithfully and honestly. His chapter "America in Dry Dock" should be read by all those who believe that "neutrality" resolutions passed by this Congress will keep the United States out of the next world war.

LEON DENNEN.

Lithograph by Pearl Binder

### *Vital and Vitalizing*

YOU MUST BREAK OUT SOMETIMES AND OTHER STORIES, *by T. O. Beachcroft. Harper and Bros. $2.*

THIS collection of short stories proves T. O. Beachcroft to be one of the ablest of the younger English writers. In narrative skill, in his ability to tell a good tale, to hold the reader's interest throughout, he has few superiors either here or in England. It is also true, unfortunately, that he has not much competition, for the one quality the contemporary short story has shown itself most deficient in is narrative power. Most stories printed today in the "quality" journals are little more than random jottings, atmospheric and impressionistic sketches that have no very discernible aim or direction or interest—in fact, a nest of pretty small eggs. It is on this nest that Mr. Edward J. O'Brien has been sitting and brooding for some years now, and whenever an egg shows signs of hatching he promptly three-stars it to help it along. Whether Mr. Beachcroft's stories have been given three, one, or no stars by Mr. O'Brien I do not remember, nor does it matter. The point is that they are not cut to the familiar pattern: they are, most of them, made of a sturdier, more durable fabric, and they bring back to the short story certain vital and vitalizing elements that it has been deprived of far too long.

For one thing, Mr. Beachcroft is not ingrown, by which I mean that he is not excessively or morbidly subjective in his approach to life. The world to him is something more than his own psyche. Primarily he is concerned with various aspects of present-day life as reflected in the disappointments, defeats, and aspirations of persons representative of the British proletariat and lower middle class—"unimportant people," the publisher's blurb calls them. Mr. Beachcroft, however, does not find them unimportant; his sympathy and respect for them are genuine and entirely free from condescension or sentimentality. He prefers to write of people who are actively engaged at something, whether in a struggle with the police or hunting for a job or at work in a factory. There is a good deal of action in almost all of his stories, and he is not afraid to make use of plot, suspense, and similar devices appropriate to his craft. Occasionally the mechanics of plot are maintained at the expense of full character delineation, but in general he gains more than he loses thereby. Certainly it is reassuring to find these qualities coming back into use.

The level of achievement represented by the collection is high, and the variety of material uncommonly wide. Of the fourteen stories included, only two, "We Too Were Lovers" and "The Three Priests," fail to come off, and in these, significantly, the author has relied on atmosphere, rather than narrative, for his effects. The most successful stories—and these are very good indeed—are "You Must Break Out Sometimes," "Busting Him One"—an excellent study of the relation of a group of factory workers to their boss—"The Stoker," "If You Can't Be Good Be Cautious," "I'll Spoil Your Pretty Face"—this, for hard, incisive writing and brilliant narrative, is comparable to the early Hemingway—and "May Day Celebrations," which is a moving and beautifully told story about a labor organizer and his wife. Mr. Beachcroft has here succeeded in communicating the dignity, loyalty, and perseverance that characterize the leaders of the proletariat, and he has come near to writing a great short story. By far the most compelling piece in the book, it proves again that the best writing is that which deals with important material. And the important theme of our time, as Mr. Beachcroft has realized, is the class struggle.

T. C. WILSON.

### *Naval History in Fiction*

TSUSHIMA, *by A. Novinkoff-Priboy. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.50.*

IF *Tsushima* does not treat, like the novels of Gladkov and Sholokhov, of a new world, it illuminates, as well as any historical treatise, some of the tangible reasons for the break-up of czarism and the end of its corruption. This elucidation comes to the reader not in the form of a lecture or of fictionalized propaganda, but as a dramatic day-by-day history of the preparations for the decisive naval battle of Tsushima, on May 15, 1905, its climax and tragic *dénouement*.

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The novel reads like a prose epic, yet its action centers not on one but on numerous heroes. It is, moreover, an epic based on truth, for the author himself was present at the battle. With his knowledge of socio-historical forces, he gives us a sound analysis of the fundamental causes of the catastrophe. And on finishing his book the reader will understand the ferment which, a month later, led to the hoisting of the Red flag on the *Potemkin,* and to all those events which made 1905 the dress-rehearsal for the October revolution. Because of these epic dimensions, of these qualities of truth, it is difficult to compare *Tsushima* with other novels. Of course, one remembers Plivier's *The Kaiser's Coolies* and Sobolev's *Romanoff;* but in Novikoff-Priboy's work one encounters the finest qualities of these masterpieces—different as they are—plus a heightened sense of historical development, a concrete dramatization of those profound ideas voiced by Lenin in connection with 1905; ideas which bore fruit in the great October victory. *Tsushima* is a major work—not only one of the best that has come to us from the Soviet Union, but one of the really important novels in contemporary literature.

ANGEL FLORES.

### *Two from England*

PIE IN THE SKY, *by Arthur Calder-Marshall. Charles Scribner's Sons.* $2.50.

ANGELS IN UNDRESS, *by Mark Benney. Random House.* $2.50.

*PIE IN THE SKY* is the third novel by Calder-Marshall to be published in this country, and it is a welcome change from his intensely personal *At Sea.* This new book still has much of the Joyce-Lawrence influence, but its method has been conditioned by that of John Dos Passos. It is a collective novel portraying a cross-section of society. You will find Carder Yorke, the self-made man of big business who, in his late middle age, is looking for his "pie in the sky" in the form of a young, pretty housekeeper, who finally marries Yorke's youngest son, a discouraged intellectual radical. You will find Carder Yorke's fellow-townsman, an unemployed millhand, who says, "You're the biggest bastard, Carder Yorke. I'll say, I bust my ribs walking down your bloody stairs in the dark, but I'm strong now, I want work, I can work as well as the next man and better . . . give me my chance." And his daughter Carrie, a sensitive young school teacher who joins the Communist Party. The *lumpen* stratum is represented by Alexy, who loves to quote radical phrases, but prefers to work for a London gangster. All of these people cross one another and run parallel to each other. But somehow the author's own point of view is not evident. Sometimes it is sympathetic, sometimes cruel. This is the penalty of objectivity. If he can, in his next novel, combine the qualities of *At Sea* with his contemporary point of view, he will give us more than an interesting (sometimes brilliant) picture of contemporary English society.

Mark Benney's book, *Angels in Undress* (in England called *Low Company*), is a highly personal story (it is published as an autobiography) of the son of a London prostitute who received his education in public schools, reform schools, and finally in prison. The chapter in which Benney describes his experience in England's infamous Portland Borstal Institution is a colorful addition to clinical literature: "The institution provided for the free expression of every instinct but the most urgent in the adolescent youngsters who formed its population. The sexual impulse alone remained unsatisfied. The consequence was pretty near disastrous." This section makes the Y.M.C.A. sequence in *Bottom Dogs* read like a Boy Scout manual. It was while he was serving his last stretch in Chelmsford Prison that Benney became acquainted with the *Yellow Book,* with Shaw, Butler, Wells, Santayana, Swinburne, Wilde, Yeats, Noyes, and Kipling, and through his reading he really learned to write. But his education, like his growth, was undisciplined and chaotic; he became a mystic and for a while threw his lot in with Spinoza's God. "All my life [he says] had been a twisted and tortuous striving to realize a truth contained in three words: Happiness is unity." Some of our critics have brought up the question of authenticity. Mr. Thompson of the New York *Times* says it's too good to be true. Maybe a ghost wrote for Mr. Benney. If so, he's a damn good ghost who knows life . . . at least Soho. And that ghost, over the signature of Mr. Benney, now contributes literary criticism to the British *Left Review.*

PETER ELLIS.

### *Brief Reviews*

SALVAGE, *by Roger Vercel. Harper's.* $2.50.

This French novel, winner of the Prix Goncourt and a recommendation of the English Book Society, comes with a publishers' blurb which compares the author to Hugo, Zola, and Pierre Loti; and a book jacket which throws in Conrad, Tomlinson, and McFee for good measure. Even C. Day Lewis has praised the book, justly I believe, for its fine writing.

The story deals with the captain and crew of a salvage boat operating off the coast of Brittany. The plot is simple and effective, the characters well-drawn, and the life of the seamen etched authentically in a good, economical style. Perhaps the shouting across the sea has been a little too loud; but, at any rate, *Salvage* is a good job, well worth reading.

WALT CARMON.

THE STRANGER PRINCE, *by Margaret Irwin. Harcourt, Brace, & Co.* $2.50.

Young ladies who follow with avid interest Mrs. Simpson's selection of a trousseau will like this fairly animated story of the mysterious Prince Rupert, who fought against the Cromwellians to preserve the crown for his weakling uncle, Charles. It is no doubt authentic enough, but the causes behind the struggle are almost as airily ignored by the author as by the court beauty who dubbed Cromwell's followers "roundheads" because of their short hair.

M. G. M.

### *Pamphlets Recently Published*

(This listing will appear regularly the first issue of every month.)

*A Blueprint for Fascism,* by Frank B. Blumenfield. American League Against War and Fascism. 5c. What the War Department, with its little-known industrial mobilization plan, has in store for us in the next war.

*Billions for Bullets,* by Elizabeth Noble. American


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*Spain and the People's Front,* by Georgi Dimitrov. Workers' Library Publishers. 3c. The Spanish war shows the necessity for strengthening the people's-front movements in other countries.

*Lenin and Spain,* by Earl Browder. Workers' Library Publishers. 1c. The Spanish civil war in the light of Leninism. An address by the General Secretary of the C.P.U.S.A. to the Lenin Memorial Meeting, Madison Square Garden, New York City, Jan. 20, 1937.

*Molotov on the New Soviet Constitution.* International Publishers. 5c. An address by the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union.

*Trotskyism Against World Peace,* by Earl Browder. Workers' Library Publishers. 1c. "Trotskyism and its alliance with fascism is no mere private threat of the Soviet Union," says the General Secretary of the Communist party, but the concern of every people threatened, however remotely, by fascism.

*Trotsky the Traitor,* by Alex Bittelman. Workers' Library Publishers. 3c. Disposing of the chief arguments against the Moscow trials and showing how terrorism and counter-revolution are inherent in Trotskyist ideology.

*Trostkyism and Fascism,* by P. Lang. Workers' Library Publishers. 10c. The world role of Trotskyism in its alliance with fascism.

*Trotskyism in the Service of Fascism Against Socialism and Peace,* by A. Y. Vyshinsky. Workers' Library Publishers. 5c. The indictment, the prosecutor's speech, and the verdict in the proceedings against Kamenev, Zinoviev, *et al.* Useful for a review of the August trials.

*Youngville, U.S.A.,* by A. M. Sirkin. The American Youth Congress. 10c. American youth tells the story of its needs and what it proposes to do about them.

*Mexico: 1936,* by William Edward Zeuch. Common Sense. 10c. Three informative articles reprinted from *Common Sense* magazine.

*Brazil,* by Bryan Green. International Publishers. 5c. The economic and political situation under the Vargas dictatorship.

*The Office Worker: Labor's Side of the Ledger,* by Orlie Pell. League for Industrial Democracy. 10c. The predicament of the clerical worker and his place in the labor movement.

*Alexander Pushkin: His Life and Literary Heritage,* by Samuel H. Cross and Ernest J. Simmons. The American-Russian Institute. 35c. A sketch of Pushkin's life, æsthetic development, and influence on Russian literature, by two well-known scholars.

## *Recently Recommended Books*

*Forward from Liberalism,* by Stephen Spender. Random House. $2.

*Let Me Live,* by Angelo Herndon. Random House. March Book Union Selection. $2.50.

*The Old Bunch,* by Meyer Levin. Viking. $2.

*The Boys in the Back Room,* by Jules Romains. Translated from the French by Jacques Le Clercq. McBride. $2.

*Something of Myself,* by Rudyard Kipling. Doubleday, Doran. $2.50.

*Changing Man: The Education System of the U.S.S.R.*. by Beatrice King. Viking. $2.75.

*Between the Hammer and the Anvil,* by Edwin Seaver. Messner. $2.50.

*I Will Not Rest,* by Romain Rolland. Translated from the French by K. S. Shelvankar. Liveright. $2.25.

*Catherine de' Medici and the Lost Revolution,* by Ralph Roeder. Viking. $3.75.

*An Actor Prepares,* by Constantin Stanislavski. Theatre Arts. $2.50.

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# SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

***A century of photography at the Museum of Modern Art—Movies, the dance, and the theater***

What writing is to those who read, that a picture is to those who have only eyes; because, however ignorant they are, they see their duty in a picture, and there, although they have not learned their letters, they read; wherefore, for the people especially, pictures stand in the place of literature.

WHEN Gregory the Great wrote thus in the sixth century to the Bishop of Marseilles, he was not thinking of art as propaganda, or art as a weapon, or any of the slogans which vex artists and critics today. Certainly he was not thinking of whether photography is art, a question which seems to disturb contemporary painters more than it does their fellow photographers. Nor will the questions be answered by a quotation from the Christian Fathers. But the photographic medium's great significance for the present is definitely implied in Gregory's words. It is the medium's infinite and flexible capacity for communication in a direct and popular sense, an inherent quality recognized by Aragon when he wrote, in his essay "Painting and Reality," that "Today the crowds are returning to art through the photograph."

Now the exhibition *Photography: 1839-1937,* current at the Museum of Modern Art in New York until April 18, does not set out to prove that photography is the twentieth-century medium for propaganda, or that because of photography painting is dead, as the enthusiastic suporters of daguerreotype cried out a century ago. It aims, by its own statement, to expound the complicated technical evolution of a scientific-artistic method in which physics and chemistry are yoked. Tracing the development of photography step by step from the slow and laborious procedure of Niépce and Daguerre, announced to the French Academy of Science and the French Academy of Art in 1839, to the present miraculously fast lenses and materials, the exhibition places chief emphasis on its theme's historical aspects. As a result, photography emerges from the Museum of Modern Art as a pre-eminently documentary and factual achievement. The issue whether photography is art in the old sense does not even arise, so engrossing are other facets of its century-long record.

That is, today we do not have a great deal of time for or patience with aloof and precious æsthetic meanderings. We may pause, momentarily, to admire indubitably great painting skill, or even, in a weak mood, to look back regretfully to the lovelier exoticisms of surrealist or abstract art. But generally, in the urgency of existence, we can consider only really pressing and important things, the words or pictures or sounds that speak directly and powerfully to our minds and our emotions. We no longer live in a synthetic oasis of non-intelligibility or non-communication. Therefore, first of all, we demand of art that it say something. If it does not, the daily papers or their news photographs offer more thrilling and more significant matter.

This point granted, the advantage of photography is obvious. A medium by its nature directed to the external world, it cannot help but possess content—unless an absent-minded operator forget to press the button on an exciting shot, or to roll the film on to the next exposure. The camera does not look inward at the sorrows of Werther; it does not commune with incommunicable grief. It faces life; it records life. And at this period of history, life is more significant than art in the traditional sense can hope to be. To document the ravages of war, the obscenities of slums, the brutality of industrial strife, the camera has potentialities far beyond those of the average painter's brush or pencil. The proof lies in the remarkable news photographs from the stricken flood areas.

Not, unfortunately, that the Museum of Modern Art exhibition demonstrates these truths. On the contrary, it only implies them. Certainly its historical sections are good, as are its scientific. But its selection of press photographs shows serious gaps; and the very inadequate representation of the Resettlement Administration photographers' work is hard to understand, since this government activity represents the most comprehensive documentary photography being carried on in the United States today. Generally the choice of contemporary works is arbitrary. And when we speak of the vast possibilities of photography as anti-war propaganda, we wish that more striking Civil War photographs from Brady had been included, and that similar World War pictures had been obtained, as well as scenes from Spain.

What the exhibition really proves, aside from illustrating the camera's amazing technical virtuosity, is that photography has a future whose limits can scarcely be imagined. Its great function, as has been said, is to capture instantaneous life and action. The miniature camera points the way, with its overballyhooed "candid" shots. Even the ordinary box camera today is 67,500 times faster than the camera of a century ago. But when one thinks of the speed of the experimental "stroboscopic" photography—with its exposures of 1/100,000th of a second—it is as if life and death are impaled on the point of light entering the lens's pinhole. Since these are days of life and death, the camera's career would seem but to be beginning.

Footnote for revolutionary artists: If a mass audience is sought, there are already in the United States alone some 5,000,000 amateur photographers. ELIZABETH NOBLE.

Skop

*"He said something about 'documents,' but they look like photographs to me."*

## THE SCREEN

EASTER week would have been a complete cinematic flop hadn't the Soviets saved the situation with a very minor but extremely pleasant film called *Beethoven Concerto* (Amkino) which New Yorkers can find at the Cameo. In spite of the title, the music for the most part is light and gay, having been composed by I. Dumayevsky, who also wrote the first Soviet musical comedy *Moscow Laughs*. The film is built around a group of musical children . . . many of them prodigies. The propaganda in the film stresses the fact that these prodigies are first of all children and then musicians. The climax is a concert where Yanka, aged eleven, plays the Beethoven Concerto with a cadenza composed by his pal Vladik aged twelve. Vladimir Gardin portrays the old violin instructor, Professor Malevich with his usual warmth.

*History Is Made At Night.* (United Artists) again demonstrates that Gene Towne and Graham Baker (who were responsible for *You Only Live Once*) are capable of writing the most absurd and incredible scripts in the name of entertainment. It contains a murder,

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a suicide, a kidnaping, a divorce, a romance situation. All this is climaxed with a ship crashing into an iceberg. But don't worry; the "tragic" lovers, Charles Boyer and Jean Arthur, come through with a happy ending.

*The King and the Chorus Girl,* starring the newest French importation, Fernand Gravet, is Warner Brothers' exploitation of royalty falling for a commoner. Although the story was written by Groucho Marx, it isn't any funnier than others of the same type. *Waikiki Wedding* (Paramount) is a plug for pineapples and pineapple juice, with Bing Crosby being pleasant, Bob Burns amusing, and Martha Raye a bit too loud and annoying.

Polite, very polite, comedy comes to the screen in the form of a film version of J. M. Barrie's *Quality Street* (R.K.O.-Radio). It is full of Victorian morals, pink tea, and Franchot Tone and Katherine Hepburn being very charming. Another remake is *Seventh Heaven* (20th Century-Fox) which has none of the pleasant sentimental memories of the Janet Gaynor-Charles Farrell version. Simone Simon and James Stewart just don't belong. An all-time low in the matter of taste, imagination, and comedy (and music) is achieved by the New Universal in their *Top of the Town.* It turns out to be a very bad plug for the Rockefellers and their Rainbow Room.

PETER ELLIS.

## THE DANCE

THE big news for dancers is the amalgamating of three of the leading dance organizations in the country, the New Dance League, the Dance Guild, and the Dancers' Association, for the foundation of what must prove a powerful force for the general good of dance and dancer, the American Dance Association. The Dance Guild is (or was) devoted principally to a cultural program. The Dancers' Association, with Tamiris at its head and such dancers as Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman active in its ranks, energetically developed a unit of action among the dancers on the economic front; had itself recognized by the Federal Dance Theatre as the organization representing the dancer, was instrumental in opening up the quotas on the W.P.A. dance projects and helped not a little in ridding the projects of an inefficient and sometimes reactionary supervision.

The New Dance League brings to the amalgamation an international organization, its branches, located in, to mention only a few of the bigger spots, New York, Chicago, San Francisco and north in Toronto and Montreal. It is itself a development of what was originally the Workers' Dance League, and from its very beginnings has led persistently in a broadening cultural program (presenting new dancers, groups, demonstrations, etc.), and concomitantly organized dancers under its militant anti-war, anti-fascist banner. In no small measure was it due to the efforts of the New Dance League that no dancer represented these United States at the Nazi Olympics in Berlin this last summer.

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gress and Festival resulted from the combined efforts of the three groups, and while this isn't the time to go into a detailed analysis of the values of that Congress, it should be indicated that plans for the second American Dance Congress (to take place in 1938) are already well under way; and that the present amalgamation is a direct development of the sense and sentiment (Resolutions) of the Congress and Festival.

When three such energetic organizations unite for common objectives, the material benefits that must result from unity of action, centralized planning, and the ordinary financial savings are obvious. What is difficult is to estimate conservatively the strength of that unity which must, in addition to its larger scope of activity, intensify its work in the broad cultural fight for decent jobs for the artist, decent wages, and a decent place to work in—a bit of security. What is difficult is to estimate conservatively the broad cultural fight against war and fascism that must emerge from the very nature of the structure of the amalgam.

At the amalgamation meetings, still in progress, the cultural program of the American Dance Association is no less stressed than the economic; there is the mature understanding of the interdependence between the cultural development of the art and the economic status of the artists; there is also the understanding that the dancers' relationship to audience is not mechanical, that the audience, no less than the dancer, must have his part in the making of the organization and the molding of its policies. The mass organization of professional dancers, amateurs, teachers and students, accompanists, reviewers, managers, and laymen should go a long way to set "America Dancing." It evidently remains for the young dancers who have grown with the proletarian movement to make a reality of what were for both Walt Whitman and the revolutionary Isadora Duncan a "vision."

And it is not by way of passing that it is to be noted that similar amalgamation in smaller scale has taken place among the dancers in Detroit (city of the victorious sit-down); that the Dance Council in San Francisco plans a bigger and better festival for this year, both with groups of proletarian dancers leading in the organizations.

The American Dance Association will celebrate its foundation in the Convention and Festival early in May; it must be supported.

OWEN BURKE.

## THE THEATER

THE fact that Sing Sing's Warden Lewis E. Lawes goes in for such things as showing the Soviet film *Road to Life* to the prisoners there (as he did a fortnight or so ago) makes a crime-and-prison play by him something for special attention. Well, the special attention given to *Chalked Out,* which he wrote in collaboration with Jonathan Finn, turns up nothing much beside a pretty well

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J. D. Egleson

finished production of a crime melodrama that makes a couple of tentative but unfulfilled gestures toward a social understanding of criminality. We sat up a little when the play began to hint at unemployment as a basic conditioner of crime, but it wasn't long before the social viewpoint yielded to that of traditional crime melodrama, with the incidental material of shootings and frameups becoming the basic dramatic material and elbowing the social causes and effects into the realm of the incidental. But to take another viewpoint, this play is definitely a cut above the ordinary Broadway crime melodrama, being free as it is from any positive viciousness and having the germ of a social analysis—and being done, moreover, with finish, for which Producer Brock Pemberton, Director Antoinette Perry, and Designer John Root are largely responsible. The acting company is expert and well balanced, and perhaps John Raby deserves special laurels for his Johnny.

Sadly lacking the playwriting and production virtuosity which helps *Chalked Out* is *Native Ground,* Virgil Geddes's family saga of life on the Great Plains, which the W.P.A. has put on in New York. Howard Bay has done some brilliant settings for this two thirds of a trilogy, but otherwise it seems a rather sad affair. The very worst thing about it is that it is only two thirds of the whole story, a fact which leaves one maddeningly in mid-air at the close of the performance—in about the spot in which we are left at the end of the second act of the usual three-act play. Of course, the fact that this effect is maddening indicates that the play has definite interest, which we hasten to say is true. But it is an interest wholly of subject matter which is considerably sabotaged by the thinness and obviousness of the dramatic construction.

A high order of technical virtuosity crops up again in the monodramas of Cornelia Otis Skinner, who is putting on several programs in her repertory in New York this week. In *The Loves of Charles II,* which was the major item on her first program, Miss Skinner failed to come to grips with history or with the character analysis that a sure knowledge of history would permit. Significantly, her performances of some modern types on the same


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program rang much truer and had a stronger satirical bite. When she was portraying the New England lady who had gone to the great Southwest and become soul-drenched with what she thought was Indianism, she was tops, and the same can be said for her version of the retail-gown-shop Russian princess. Again we must remark that there is something akin to black magic in the ability of a solo performer to crowd a stage with characters. Miss Skinner is giving some performances Sunday, April 4, so New Yorkers have an opportunity to judge for themselves.

ALEXANDER TAYLOR.

★

## *Forthcoming Broadcasts*

(Times given are Eastern Standard, but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

*Music. Das Rheingold.* (The Metropolitan Opera Co.'s regular Sat. aft. program.) Apr. 3, 1:50 p.m. N.B.C. red. Artur Rodzinski conducting the New York Philharmonic's regular Sun. aft. program, Apr. 4, 3 p.m., Columbia.

*Debate.* Columbia U. vs. U. of California. "Resolved, that teachers should have a point of view." Sat., Apr. 3, 2:30 p.m.. N.B.C. blue.

*"Freedom of Assembly."* U.S. office of education presents another dramatized episode in its "Let Freedom Ring" series Mon., Apr. 5, 10:30 p.m., Columbia.

*Emergency Peace Campaign.* Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt; Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd; Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick. Tues., Apr. 6, 10:30 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

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*The Woman Alone.* Director Alfred Hitchcock's version of Conrad's *The Secret Agent,* with Sylvia Sidney.

*The Man Who Could Work Miracles.* Roland Young in a funny H. G. Wells story.

### PLAYS

*Candida* (Empire, N. Y.) Revival of Shaw's domestic-relations comedy, with Katharine Cornell.

*Storm Over Patsy* (Guild, N. Y.). James Bridie's adaptation of Bruno Frank's pleasant comedy about a dog who precipitated a domestic-relations and political crisis.

*Helen Howe.* Monodramas in social satire, on tour: Apr. 7, Sunset Club, Seattle, Wash.; Apr. 12, San Mateo Jr. College, San Mateo, Cal.; Apr. 21, College Club, Portland, Me.; Apr. 23, Watertown, Mass.; May 1, E. Northfield, Mass.

*The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse* (Playhouse, N. Y.). Cedric Hardwicke in Barré Lyndon's smooth, clever, crook comedy-drama.

*Power* (Ritz, N. Y.). The Living Newspaper's powerful and amusing attack on the utilities racket.

*The Sun and I* (Adelphi, N. Y.). A free rendering of the story of the Biblical Joseph, by Leona and Barrie Stavis.

*Having Wonderful Time* (Lyceum, N. Y.). Marc Connelly direction and Arthur Kober authorship of a play about young love at camp.

*Marching Song* (Bayes, N. Y.). The Theatre Union's strong production of John Howard Lawson's play about an auto strike.


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